

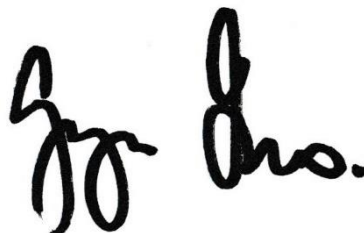
ECUMENICAL MISSION COMMUNITIES IN THE  
COUNTY OF CUMBRIA: AN INTERROGATION OF  
THE IMPACT OF IMPLEMENTATION ON  
CHAPLAINCY MODELS.

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the  
University of Chester for the degree of Doctor of Ministry by Glynn  
Jones.

January 2020

DECLARATION

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my original contribution has been made explicit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glynn Jones'.

January 2020

## ABSTRACT

Ecumenical Mission Communities in the County of Cumbria: An Interrogation of the Impact of Implementation on Chaplaincy Models - by Reverend Glynn Jones, MA.

In 2014 Anglican, Methodist, Salvation Army and United Reformed churches in Cumbria came together under a formal covenant to form 'Mission Communities'. The stated intention for these new groupings was to resolve to seek out every opportunity for joint initiatives: to work together to equip both lay and ordained ministry – and to share buildings and resources wherever possible. Mission Communities were to share a common evangelistic emphasis under the banner of 'God for All'. This thesis identifies that the ecumenical and evangelistic nature of the new, imposed structure has been the cause of a disconnect between chaplains and Mission Communities. The research question addressed throughout is, 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models in Cumbria?' After tracing the historical development of Mission Communities, due to the needs of the research I identified all the chaplains in the county and offered every one of them the opportunity to participate by expressing their perception of how the introduction of Mission Communities has impacted upon their work and ministry. A thematic analysis of responses extrapolates that five significant issues arise: ecumenism, same-sex relations, sacraments, the role of women in Christian leadership and episcopacy. The weight of the collective view on each of these issues is balanced against an alternative view and then synthesised into a summary of the theological and practical impact as a whole. Whilst the purpose of this research was to identify early impact with a view to informing the wider church of the implications of reorganising in this way, the results are mixed and reflect the issues that were uppermost in church conversation at the time the research was conducted. It may provide the foundation for a longitudinal study at the conclusion (in 2020) of the Cumbrian outreach initiative 'God for All', when ecumenical Mission Communities in Cumbria will have been established for four years and a second phase of impact can be assessed. Three outcomes were envisaged:

- 1) To provide denominational leaders with a basis on which to assess the impact that their decisions have made on ordained and lay ministers across Cumbria.
- 2) To encourage chaplains to assess how they engage and function with Mission Communities after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this study.
- 3) To be of practical use to those of the wider church who may be in the process of exploring similar changes.

To this end, the thesis concludes with a clear set of recommendations to enable chaplains and Mission Communities to reconnect.

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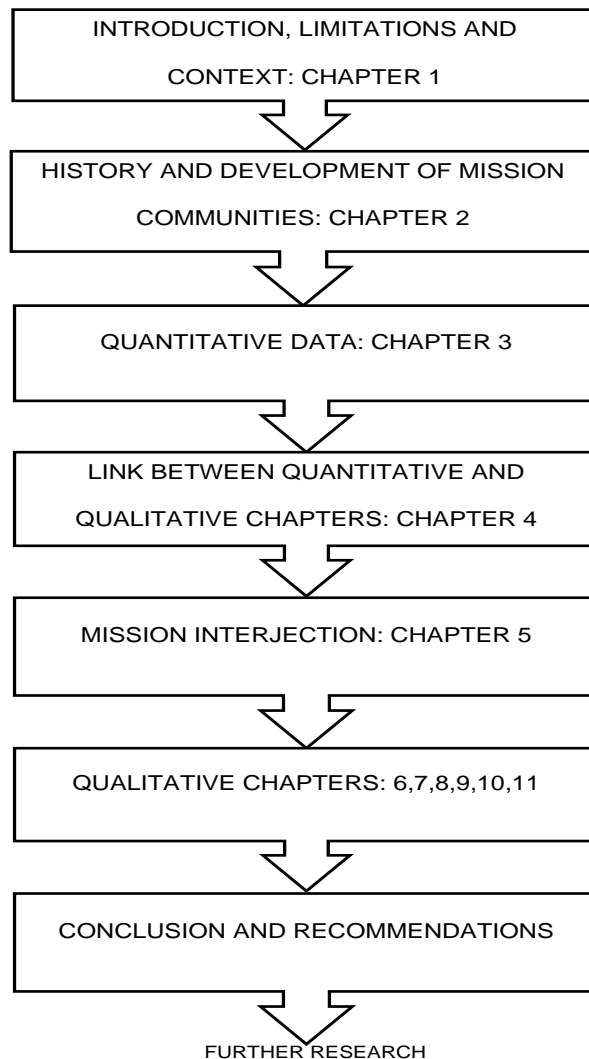
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 *Diagrammatic Structure*

As will be subsequently referred to, one of the intended outcomes of this research is to enable all chaplains in Cumbria to identify themselves in this work, and to then assess how they engage and function in ecumenical Mission Communities. The following diagrammatical illustration is included to assist readers to navigate their way around the study, as well as providing a convenient point of reference.





## *1.2 Limitations and Context*

This research has been prompted by a major reorganisation in the Diocese of Carlisle and the County of Cumbria, hereafter referred to collectively as 'Cumbria', in order to remove any perception of unconscious bias towards a Church of England structure. It was felt that using the Anglican term 'diocese' to describe a geographical area throughout the paper might be perceived as inadvertently sidelining the other partner denominations, as well as suggesting that I, as the researcher, might be overly influenced by my own cultural, personal and religious experiences. It should be noted though, that I am indeed an ordained Anglican priest who has served for over 40 years in Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) and, at the time of conducting this research, also hold the Bishop of Carlisle's licence under the title of 'Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle'. In this role, pastoral oversight of all Mission Community chaplains does not infer or carry with it any line-management responsibilities. Despite making efforts not to succumb to unconscious bias, there is a clear acknowledgement that I cannot take a wholly distanced and objective view, due to my immersion in chaplaincy ministry over many years. However, neither I personally nor my ministry have been directly or indirectly affected by the 2014 reorganisation. The context of these limitations are set within the covenantal framework which emanated from the emergence of a formal denominational partnership.

In 2014 the Church of England, along with the Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) agreed and formalised an ecumenical partnership. Subsequently, in 2016, the Salvation Army joined what, by that time, had

become a formal covenant. Consequently, the 270 Anglican parishes of the Diocese of Carlisle are gradually being restructured and grouped together with the Methodist Circuits, Salvation Army Corps and URC congregations across Cumbria to form 40 'Mission Communities'.<sup>1</sup> Within Cumbria are a number of chaplaincy models. It is not possible at this stage to know how the reorganisation will affect the extended church (in particular, chaplains and their ministries). However, this study will seek to establish the relationship between chaplains and Mission Communities. It has no starting hypothesis - but uses a grounded theory methodology which asks the question, 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models in Cumbria?' It then seeks to use gathered data to identify the relationship between chaplains and Mission Communities through a manual thematic analysis. The overarching methodology is a balanced mixture of quantitative and qualitative.

A number of factors have shaped and influenced the reasons for choosing to explore this relationship between chaplains and Mission Communities. First, the theoretical problem posed by introducing a radical change of working practice provided an opportunity to contribute, albeit in a modest way, to the development of joint working in Cumbria. In the early stages I was beginning to notice some misgivings from chaplains when a policy decision was made to move towards a greater emphasis on evangelism – these doubts appeared to be reinforced when the emphasis moved from 'light-touch' implementation to something more robust. In the

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of the title "Mission Communities", see Chapter 2 (Development of Mission Communities in Cumbria), 41.

light of this, I envisage an outcome of this contribution to be of interest to the Bishop of Carlisle and the other ecumenical faith leaders. It will provide them with a basis on which to assess the impact that their decisions have on ordained and lay ministers and chaplains across Cumbria by engaging with the clear set of recommendations contained in the Conclusion.

The second expected outcome is that, presented with a stark overall picture of a potentially disjointed relationship between chaplains and Mission Communities, chaplains will assess how they engage and function after identifying themselves, and/or their colleagues, in this thesis: thus adding a pragmatic outcome to the primary academic foundation of the research.

Third, another outcome of the final product is that it should be of practical use to the wider Anglican Church, some dioceses of which might be in the process of exploring similar changes. It is envisaged that other dioceses will be able to access this research and utilise the process and findings to match their own circumstances. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there is no place in the research for comparing and contrasting with other dioceses who may also be operating some form of Mission Community model. This is because, after contacting other dioceses that have similar structures (Exeter, Liverpool and Chelmsford) they were found to be so different from Cumbria that a comparison would not enhance or be particularly applicable to the research question – the main area of difference being that they do not share the distinctly ecumenical perspective of the Cumbrian Mission Community model.

### *1.3 History and Development*

Chapter 2 (History and Development of Mission Communities) traces how Mission Communities have evolved up to this point, and the impact of introduction at various places along the way. It locates all that follows within a framework of development around the research question which runs throughout, namely: 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models throughout Cumbria?' This chapter identifies some of the primary drivers of Mission Communities and their influences, at the same time acknowledging some of the gaps in documentation and minutes of formal meetings. One of the early contributors, a senior Anglican priest, will be identified as an individual consistently at the centre of developments, whose experience and recall has been widely called upon to fill those gaps. Whilst this person's contribution will be seen to be valuable, some of their input may fall into the category of subjective opinion. Chapter 2 concludes with a timeline summary, intended to provide an accessible, historical reference point of events.

### *1.4 Quantitative Chapter*

Chapter 3 (Surveying the Quantitative Landscape) is the foundation for the eventual qualitative element of this work. It begins by identifying a scope of inclusion: setting its own boundaries as to which roles and personnel will be included in the scope of chaplaincy. Having defined chaplains as all those who exercise a Christian ministry in a non-parochial setting, a total of 74 individuals were identified as meeting the criteria, and were invited to

participate in this data-gathering exercise, which ask questions that will provide the basis for a qualitative follow-up. From this first enquiry there were 31 responses, representing 42% of all 74 chaplains. Two more data-gathering questionnaires were sent out. One was to identify and compare the demographic make-up of Cumbrian chaplains (in order to put them into context with Cumbrian and UK national statistics). Whilst it is important to understand the somewhat unique demographic composition of the Cumbrian populace and its relevance to the research question, a methodological choice was taken to include the detailed analysis in Appendix 3.

The other (supplementary) questionnaire was sent out part-way through the research. The reason for this was that some of the responses coming back were not predicted at the research-design stage. This consequently led me to question whether or not chaplains had been adequately consulted prior to the implementation of Mission Communities. The results of this diversion will be seen in Chapter 5 (Mission).

### *1.5 Chaplains - Representative Examples*

Chapter 4 (Chaplains – Representative Examples) is the bridge between the quantitative and qualitative chapters. In it I will seek to show the relationship between chaplains and service users by illustrating four representative examples:

- Chaplains working in the prison environment;
- Chaplains working in the healthcare environment;
- Chaplains working in the emergency-services environment;

- Chaplains working in the night/street economy.

The chapter begins by engaging with the issue of impact and establishing working definitions relevant to this study. It will show that overall responses from chaplains suggest that there are a number of distinctive characteristics which separate chaplains from other clergy/lay ministers. Finally, the chapter identifies who in-scope chaplains are, how they are trained, who they are accountable to, how their work is measured and how they might engage in healthy partnerships with their host organisations.

### *1.6 Mission Interjection*

Chapter 5 (Mission) is an interjection between the quantitative and qualitative chapters. It is placed at this point in the flow of the thesis because the data returned did not reflect some of my expectations. The chapter will identify how denominational faith leaders define mission – it will also illustrate chaplains' responses when specifically asked how their host organisation might understand the term mission. It will also demonstrate how chaplains themselves understand the role of mission in their field of ministry. This exploration did not lead to the significant contention envisaged at the research-design stage. Consequently, whilst the responses to mission are acknowledged, they are not explored to any depth since they did not consistently arise as a significant issue.

Appendix 1 shows that the questions were framed in a way that encouraged respondents to answer without any direct prompting towards

making comment about the subject of mission. However, prior to the final set of questions being sent out, a sample was submitted to a small (six in number) group of chaplains. All of the chaplains in the sample responded with some comment about mission and its definition – evidently because the word ‘mission’ is at the core of each question that mentions Mission Community. Consequently, the final set of questions opted to continue to use ‘Mission Community’, but only ask one specific question about an understanding of mission, which was, ‘What, if any, does your host organisation (employer) understand by the term “mission”?’

### *1.7 Qualitative Chapters*

The qualitative element of this research is based on an ontological premise that relies on the understanding that, if Christian chaplaincy is incarnational, then the presence of God must be in that place. This is explored qualitatively by surveys and interviews. These methods have in mind a phenomenological aspect: that chaplains are trying to make sense of the phenomena of Mission Communities - and that this is indeed interpretist: meaning that, in its epistemological sense, chaplains are grasping the subjective meaning of the impact of the implementation of Mission Communities.

Chapters 6-11 explore some major themes of disconnection that the thematic analysis revealed: ecumenism, same-sex issues, the role of women in Christian leadership, sacraments and episcopacy. Whilst these five subjects consistently arose from returns and interviews, they did not all carry equal weight. Ecumenism attracted most comment and strength of feeling. At

the time of research, same-sex issues and the role of women in leadership were relatively high-profile talking points in both church and secular arenas. Therefore, these two subjects were referred to in responses and questionnaires in equal measure after ecumenism. Whilst sacraments and episcopacy became discrete issues, it will be seen that some respondents linked them closely with the issue of ecumenism. In addition, some questioned how a different understanding of eucharistic theology, as well as the theological differences of interpretation of church governance, could be reconciled.

As previously noted, some of the responses received were not predicted during the research-design stage of this work and therefore, mid-research, a slight change of direction was explored via a supplementary question. This was directed towards ascertaining how deeply chaplains were encouraged to engage in the consultation process.<sup>2</sup> The results can be seen in 3.4 (Supplementary Engagement Consultation and Responses).

### *1.8 Ethical Considerations*

Care has been taken in the assessment of whom the impact is upon, because service users of chaplaincy facilities may often, though not always, fall into the category of being 'vulnerable'. For example, those held in custody, whatever their needs or circumstances, are considered to be

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 4 asks, 'Specifically in your role as a chaplain, to what degree do you feel that you were encouraged to participate in the consultation process prior to the introduction of Mission Communities?' Choices of response to the question were: Greatly encouraged; Encouraged; Neither encouraged nor discouraged; Discouraged; Greatly discouraged.



vulnerable adults.<sup>3</sup> Prisoners are easy to identify as a special consideration when it comes to ethics. Still, amongst the plethora of chaplaincy service users may be those who are not so readily identifiable as vulnerable. Whilst potentially vulnerable service users were given due consideration for inclusion within the scope of this research, my final methodological choice was to refrain from sending questionnaires, conducting interviews or eliciting observations from service users in order to focus solely on service providers, and the impact that the introduction of Mission Communities has on them. However, a discrete research project focusing on service users (with a carefully managed ethical framework) would sit comfortably alongside this research (and the longitudinal research alluded to in the Conclusion), thus enhancing the overall picture of the impact of the introduction of Mission Communities.

### *1.9 Literature Review*

Whilst ecumenical Mission Communities are a pioneering work and nothing directly addressing them appears to have been written, this research does build upon a number of publications that have helped to shape the research design and support some of the findings. Some of the foundations to this research can be significantly identified in two previous studies: Andrew Todd

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<sup>3</sup> Prison Service Instruction (PSI) 16/2015 states: 'All adult prisoners (aged 18 or over) are protected from abuse and neglect'. It describes the processes that prisons must put in place to ensure that prisoners receive a level of protection that is equivalent to that provided to adults in the community with care and support needs who are at risk of abuse or neglect. It encourages Governors to engage with local authority Safeguarding Adults Boards.

et al, 'The Church of England's Involvement in Chaplaincy',<sup>4</sup> and Ben Ryan's, 'A Very Modern Ministry: Chaplaincy in the UK'.<sup>5</sup>

Todd's report provided the groundwork for a quantitative mapping exercise, which has been adapted for this research to enable a more focused survey. This satisfies itself that all chaplains (ordained and lay) within Cumbria have been identified and offered the opportunity to contribute. In defining chaplains, Todd used the term, 'Doing God's work in secular places'.<sup>6</sup> This research defines chaplains slightly differently from Todd. It asserts that all those who have a Christian ministry in a non-parochial setting are defined as chaplains. In terms of context, Todd examines five qualitative case studies of different kinds of chaplaincy, whilst this research explores the five thematic issues (ecumenism, same-sex, sacraments, the role of women in leadership and episcopacy) arising from qualitative analysis of interviews. Whilst Todd et al provides a general and overall chaplaincy picture to be built upon, it is Ryan's 'A Very Modern Ministry' that engages more closely with impact.

Impact forms a whole chapter in Ryan's study. He suggests that there is a lack of consensus when it comes to defining impact in this context, and in an effort to establish some clarity devotes a section in the chapter to looking at '... the mission and purpose of chaplaincy and how that is understood in

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<sup>4</sup> Andrew Todd, Victoria Slater and Sarah Dunlop, The Cardiff Centre for Chaplaincy Studies (CCCS) and The Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology & Practical Theology (OxCEPT), Cuddesdon. *"The Church of England's Involvement in Chaplaincy"*, for The Mission and Public Affairs Council, 2014. [cited 8 March 2015]. Online: [http://stmichaels.ac.uk/assets/pdf/Todd\\_Slater\\_Dunlop\\_2014\\_Report\\_on\\_Church\\_of\\_England\\_Chaplaincy\\_Chaplaincy.pdf](http://stmichaels.ac.uk/assets/pdf/Todd_Slater_Dunlop_2014_Report_on_Church_of_England_Chaplaincy_Chaplaincy.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ben Ryan, *"A Very Modern Ministry: Chaplaincy in the UK"*, 2015. [cited 7 April 2015]. Online: [www.theosthinktank.co.uk/files/files/Modern\\_Ministry\\_combined.pdf](http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/files/files/Modern_Ministry_combined.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Todd, Slater and Dunlop, *The Church of England's Involvement in Chaplaincy*, 7.

practice. Until there is a proper appreciation of what chaplaincy is for, any question of impact risks looking at the wrong issue'.<sup>7</sup> With Ryan's warning in mind, this study framed its questionnaires and interviews towards understanding from Cumbrian chaplains how they (and their host organisations) saw the practice of mission and chaplaincy within the new structure of the churches and their ecumenical network of Mission Communities. It was from those responses that the most relevant issues were identified and further explored for their impact. Whilst Todd and Ryan have been of the most significant relevance, the work of Threlfall-Holmes and Newitt has also had some bearing.<sup>8</sup>

Miranda Threlfall-Holmes and Mark Newitt present a picture of chaplaincy by, in the first five sections, taking the stories of more than twenty Christian chaplains from a diverse range of chaplaincy fields. These individuals all speak of what they do and why they do it. Moreover, the question of what chaplaincy is for (Ryan's pivotal point) is addressed by them, either implicitly or explicitly. The final section of the monograph is a collection of theological reflections. Most relevant to this research is the assertion by Threlfall-Holmes that, for many, chaplaincy equates to some sort of missionary activity in order to reach the unchurched of society. She rightly points out, 'This model can be particularly feared by employers, for whom "mission" may well be a dirty word'.<sup>9</sup> It is for this reason that Enquiry One (3.2) specifically asks, 'What, if any, does your host organisation (employer)

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<sup>7</sup> Ryan, *A Very Modern Ministry*, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Miranda Threlfall-Holmes and Mark Newitt, *Being a Chaplain*. (London: SPCK, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Threlfall-Holmes and Newitt, *Being a Chaplain*, 119.

understand by the term mission?’ Mowat and Swinton also refer to mission, but in a more oblique way than Threlfall-Holmes and Newitt.

Mowat and Swinton examine chaplaincy within the National Health Service (NHS) across Scotland in ‘What Do Chaplains Do? The Role of the Chaplain in Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Patients’.<sup>10</sup> Of particular interest to this study is the distinction made between religious and spiritual need. They observe that ‘Chaplains see their work as Christian and Christ-like, but not an evangelical mission’.<sup>11</sup> This may be problematic to those who take the view that all Christian ministry is agenda driven – the agenda being to ‘go and make disciples’. Yet, a number of chaplains in Cumbria responded to the question of mission in a way that suggests that they would sit comfortably with a description from a respondent to Mowat and Swinton’s research: ‘She does what she does in Christ’s name, but she wouldn’t enter a conversation desperate to mention Jesus’.<sup>12</sup> In drawing out the distinction between the religious and the spiritual, Mowat and Swinton assert that chaplains have to be available to all faiths and none. They identify the implied importance to NHS chaplains of spiritual neutrality, arising out of an understanding of the difference between religious and spiritual care.<sup>13</sup> It may be that some of the respondents to the Cumbrian study also subscribe to spiritual neutrality,

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<sup>10</sup> H. Mowat and J Swinton, *What Do Chaplains Do? The Role of the Chaplain in Meeting the Spiritual Needs of Patients*. (Aberdeen: Mowat Research, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Mowat and Swinton, *What Do Chaplains Do?*, 49.

<sup>12</sup> Mowat and Swinton, *What Do Chaplains Do?*, 47.

<sup>13</sup> Mowat and Swinton, *What Do Chaplains Do?*, 9.

In outlining some of the implications for spiritual care (as opposed to religious care), Mowat and Swinton note a number of points: 1) Religious care alone does not meet the wider spiritual needs of the non-religious patient; 2) Spiritual care includes, and may seek to meet, religious need; 3) Despite the diversity of understandings surrounding spirituality, the significance of personal faith is, for chaplains, the basis for chaplaincy.

therefore making it problematic for some if translated as a form of secular humanism: the desire to meet service users at their point of need, without any reference to faith.

Other recent contributors to the chaplaincy debate, and pertinent to the research question, include Steddon, who offers a helpful theological distinction between institutional and community-based chaplaincy models. He suggests that institutional chaplaincy holds to a 'host' theology, where the institution invites the chaplain to 'Come to our place and do as we do'. In contrast to this is 'guest' theology, where the community chaplain enquires of the community 'May I come to your place and be part of what you do?'<sup>14</sup> Both theologies can be seen across the spectrum of chaplaincy in Cumbria, and both produce a different impact on chaplains and the people they serve.

Whilst much of the literature concerning chaplaincy comes from an institutional perspective, Giles Legood (along with the aforementioned Threlfall-Holmes and Newitt) is amongst only a small number who devote space to the lesser-known community chaplaincies, such as retail and shopping-centre chaplains.<sup>15</sup> This is helpful in the Cumbrian context, as there are a greater number of community chaplains than institutional ones.

Also addressing community chaplains is Victoria Slater. Although hers is a single-case study of the emergence and development of a rural chaplain, it resonates very closely with the Cumbrian perspective, mirroring many of

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<sup>14</sup> P. Steddon, *Street Church: Fresh Expressions ... and Beyond?* (Oxford: self-published, 2010), 11-12.

<sup>15</sup> Giles Legood, *Chaplaincy: The Church's Sector Ministries* (London: Cassell, 1999).

the responses received from agricultural chaplains for the purpose of this study.<sup>16</sup>

Linda Woodhead, although not addressing chaplaincy specifically, identifies that there is a contrast between the liberal-thinking populace of the UK and the Church – she suggests that they may be facing in opposite directions.<sup>17</sup> Woodhead's article constructs a 'liberalism scale'. She concludes that 83% of the UK populace are liberal in their social thinking. In contrast to this are faith representatives (in particular Muslims, conservative evangelicals and both Anglican and Catholic bishops) who present a conservative view of abortion, same-sex marriage and assisted dying – this takes society at large and churches in opposite directions, she argues, and has led to the rise of those identifying as non-religious. Woodhead also notes that 'most Anglicans are almost as liberal as "nones", scoring 92% on the liberalism scale'. If Woodhead is correct, then chaplains (as faith representatives) are operating in a difficult place, because many of the people they serve are 'facing the other way'. The relevance of Woodhead's argument is that it sits comfortably with some of the concerns that chaplains in Cumbria have expressed: believing that this perception of travelling in opposite directions has an impact upon how chaplains may be seen by service users.

Paul Ballard writes about chaplains being fully integrated into the community that they serve. He identifies this integration when he states that

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<sup>16</sup> Victoria Slater, "Living Church in the World: Chaplaincy and the Mission of the Church", *Practical Theology* 5.3 (2012): 307-320.

<sup>17</sup> Linda Woodhead, "The Rise of 'No Religion' in Britain: The Emergence of a New Cultural Majority", *Journal of the British Academy* 4 (2016): 251-252.

‘A key characteristic of chaplaincy is that its primary context is embedded in social structures’.<sup>18</sup> Whilst Ballard talks about being embedded as a positive thing, questions are raised in this study about whether this sense of being embedded leads chaplains to become inextricably linked to their particular ministry, thus risking becoming detached from any reference point to their faith or denomination.

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<sup>18</sup> Paul Ballard, “Locating Chaplaincy: A Theological Note”, *Crucible* July/September (2009): 18-24.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT OF MISSION COMMUNITIES IN CUMBRIA

This chapter concerns itself with the parish structure from which ecumenical Mission Communities are departing. It follows the development and early influences of ecumenical Mission Communities and suggests that Receptive Ecumenism – before it was even given the name - was the underlying framework of God for All, one of the principal policy documents of ecumenical Mission Communities. Other policy documents are examined and analysed, as is the significance of a gap in the minutes of the development meetings. The chapter concludes with a timeline of ecumenical Mission Communities as they progressed.

### *2.1 Structures, Participants and Policies*

For contextual purposes, it is necessary to understand the structure of the Church of England. At the head are the Provinces of Canterbury and York. Alongside is the General Synod, made up of archbishops, bishops, deans and a number of elected representatives. Roughly paralleling each county is a diocese, which is further sub-divided into deaneries. At 'grassroots' level, deaneries comprise parishes. The intention behind the parish system is that every home in England has access to a parish church to which it can look for spiritual care and oversight.<sup>19</sup> The Diocese of Carlisle is currently made up of

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<sup>19</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "How the Church of England is Organised". [cited 25 November 2015]. Online [www.carlisediocese.org.uk/our-diocese/diocesan-committees-html](http://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/our-diocese/diocesan-committees-html)



270 parishes. It is the parish system which the new arrangement departs from, and which gives rise to this study.

Both diocese and county have engaged in a radical change of practice following the agreement (in October 2014) of plans for a reorganisation of the Church of England's parish system in Cumbria. Under the new structure, the Diocese of Carlisle's synod agreed to create up to 40 Mission Communities across the county. The ultimate outcome will be that the 270 parishes in the diocese will gradually be grouped together with churches from the Methodist Circuits, Salvation Army Corps and URC congregations to form ecumenical Mission Communities. This began to cement together in 2011 with Anglicans, Methodists and URC in Cumbria signing a 'Declaration of Intent', signalling moves to work more closely together in mission. This culminated in the three denominations putting their hands to the more formal (but non-legally-binding) 'Declaration of Covenant Partnership' in 2014. Subsequently, in November 2016, the Salvation Army joined the covenant, in a ceremony in Carlisle Cathedral. Each signatory of the declaration committed themselves and their churches to: seek out every possible opportunity for joint initiatives especially for God for All,<sup>20</sup> at local and county level in mission to all the people of Cumbria; work together to equip both lay and ordained ministry whenever possible, and to share that ministry wherever appropriate; continue

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<sup>20</sup> God for All is an ecumenical mission project with a focus on Cumbria. Its aim is that, by 2020, every person in Cumbria will have had the opportunity, after learning more of God and His purpose for their lives, to become a follower of Jesus within the context of a worshipping Christian community. God for All is one of the principal policy documents for ecumenical Mission Communities.

the work of developing strategies whereby the use of church buildings are optimised for the benefit of communities throughout the county.<sup>21</sup>

During the same ceremony, leaders from the Religious Society of Friends in Cumbria, the Roman Catholics, the North Western Baptist Association and the Church of Scotland signed a 'Letter of Companionship', affirming their commitment to pray for those churches who signed the declaration, and to work in mission with the denominations at local and county level where possible.

As far back as 2003, the then Bishop of Penrith had identified that the parish system was unsustainable in the county. Church-going in the West had seen a steady decline throughout the 1990s. Cumbria in particular had lost almost a quarter of adult church members and about 60% of children and young people. These losses went hand-in-hand with an inexorable drop in the number of clergy working in the diocese. At that point, the Bishop of Penrith produced a document for the diocese outlining a structure for change and a blueprint of principles for Mission Units.<sup>22</sup> Evolving from this document was the 'God for All' initiative, to which all partner denominations have pledged their commitment through the Declaration of Covenant Partnership. Although not specifically stated (because the term was undeveloped at the time that God for All was being planned), the initiators of ecumenical Mission

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<sup>21</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "Cumbria's ecumenical status is strengthened." [cited 28 November 2016]. Online: [www.carlislediocese.org.uk/news/1759/312/Cumbrias-ecumenical-county-status-is-strengthened.html](http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/news/1759/312/Cumbrias-ecumenical-county-status-is-strengthened.html)

<sup>22</sup> James Newcome, "Principles for Mission Units," 2003. [cited 25 November 2015]. Online: [http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/734/Principles\\_for\\_Mission\\_Units-doc.html](http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/734/Principles_for_Mission_Units-doc.html)

Communities were working with, I argue, what is now recognised as Receptive Ecumenism.

## *2.2 Receptive Ecumenism*

Revisiting, in August 2019, all four of the denominational faith leaders who were instrumental in initiating ecumenical Mission Communities in Cumbria, they were each asked, 'At the planning stage (for ecumenical Mission Communities), what was your understanding of the theological vision and place of chaplains within the strategy?' The first replied:

I don't think we had any real sense of how chaplains would be included in the strategy at the planning stage. Some of this depends on how 'chaplain' is defined. In terms of traditional understandings of chaplaincy, for example hospitals and prisons, I don't think this is something we greatly considered. Where chaplaincy had some look-in was around the interface between chaplaincy and fresh expressions/pioneering - for example through auction mart chaplains and others working with the agricultural community and the town chaplaincies that were experimented with in one or two places.<sup>23</sup>

Another responded:

As a faith leader, the main driver for me was 'mission' and the 'God for All' strategy. Seeing the potential of Mission Communities was the reason for working more ecumenically. My understanding of the place of chaplaincy and that mode of mission was that it enabled trans-denominational mission to take place more easily: working more for the Kingdom of God in any community, which is the result of some collaboration of different denominations taking a lead in certain areas. Chaplaincy mode enabled this to happen more easily.<sup>24</sup>

The third contribution was:

While planning ecumenical Mission Communities, the faith leaders were very conscious of the huge number of chaplains within the county, and were keen that their gifts, experience and role on the 'front-line' of mission should be supported by – and a resource for – the Mission

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<sup>23</sup> Respondent U1 @i77

<sup>24</sup> Respondent S1 @i84

Communities of which they form a part. It was never our intention that they should be separate from those Mission Communities, and we need to work hard to ensure that the integration we envisage actually takes place.<sup>25</sup>

The final response was:

It is my understanding that right at the very beginning of the ecumenical Mission Community planning stage, there wasn't anything in particular about chaplains. But, at that point we hadn't become so defined - that was to follow later. However, right from the very start we were committed to evangelism and growth because we have been met by, and are undergoing, the living God. This understanding right at the beginning of ecumenical Mission Communities underpinned our commitment to be a church that aligns with the "*missio Dei*", the mission of God for all. Naturally and rightly chaplaincy is part of this understanding, even if it was not spelt out right at the beginning of what we were doing in Cumbria.<sup>26</sup>

These four comments indicate to me (along with the observations made in 'Chaplaincy and Discipleship'<sup>27</sup>), that chaplains were considered to be an integral (rather than discrete) part of an ecumenical strategy which was Receptive Ecumenism in all but name.<sup>28</sup>

Whilst the place of Receptive Ecumenism is more fully explained in Chapter 7.2, from the secondary interviews conducted I believe that the unspoken intention of the denominational faith leaders is broadly in line with what Callan Slipper, National Ecumenical Officer, calls Receptive Ecumenism. During interview, Slipper describes Receptive Ecumenism as an interesting way forward because it receives the gifts that other denominations have to offer, as well as recognising that they too have needs which my

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<sup>25</sup> Respondent A1@i74

<sup>26</sup> Respondent M1@i75

<sup>27</sup> Richard Pratt, "Chaplaincy and Discipleship", [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/669/Chaplaincy\\_and\\_Discipleship.pdf.html](https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/669/Chaplaincy_and_Discipleship.pdf.html)

<sup>28</sup> Paul Murray, "Introducing Receptive Ecumenism", *The Ecumenist: A Journal of Theology, Culture and Society* Vol 51, No2 (Spring 2014): 1-8.

denomination may well be gifted to meet. Chapter 6 of this thesis observes that one of the perceived obstacles to ecumenical Mission Communities is the understanding of truth. Slipper also acknowledges that truth is at the centre of understanding Receptive Ecumenism, but he sees it more positively. For Slipper it is a mutual discovery of truth which transforms our relationship through three primary effects:

1. Receptive Ecumenism brings about a transformation of the listening churches. This might be described as a 'conversion', because I change in what I learn from the other – and this actually underlines, rather than threatens, my identity.
2. The quality of relationships between denominations changes when there is no hint that this is an exercise in ecclesiastical imperialism upon any other church.
3. Receptive Ecumenism underlines the pluriformity of Christian experience of the many gifts that there are.<sup>29</sup>

Research for this study appears to show that the five disconnecting themes are borne out of a fear of conformity. It might be argued that this perception may have been avoided if the main principles behind Receptive Ecumenism were articulated to chaplains at an early stage. Directly linked to Receptive Ecumenism – and arising from the secondary interviews - is *missio Dei*: specifically stated in the final interview (above), but also implicit in the other interviews.

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<sup>29</sup>Callan Slipper, "Receptive Ecumenism", [cited 28 August 2019]. Online: [https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/252478/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive\\_Ecumenism/Receptive\\_Ecumenism\\_and/Receptive\\_Ecumenism\\_and.aspx](https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/252478/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive_Ecumenism/Receptive_Ecumenism_and/Receptive_Ecumenism_and.aspx)

Respondent M1 @i75, on the surface, appears to sit comfortably alongside Bosch's definition that, 'Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God'.<sup>30</sup> However, the *missio Dei* articulated here appears to be rooted in an ecclesiological framework which Flett describes as, 'The problem that is *missio Dei*... easily susceptible to the political or social *zeitgeist*'.<sup>31</sup> Pikkert also challenges the wide range of interpretation of *missio Dei*.<sup>32</sup> However, in drawing a close link between the evangelistic tone of God for All and *missio Dei*, all four respondents appear to understand mission as going out from the church with the ultimate intention of returning to the church. This does not fit readily with chaplaincy models where, as is noted in Chapter 5 (Mission), chaplaincy goes to where people are and becomes the church in that place, rather than having an agenda to subsequently relocate it.

## 2.3 God for All

God for All is one of the principal policy documents for ecumenical Mission Communities. As noted earlier, it is an ecumenical concept that describes the vision of enabling everyone in Cumbria to discover more of God and God's purposes in their lives. 'God for All brings together the different facets of each denomination's commitment to grow disciples and draws upon existing

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<sup>30</sup> David Bosch. *Transforming Mission*. (New York: Orbis, 1991), 390.

<sup>31</sup> John Flett. *The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio Dei, Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 35-77.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Pikkert. *The Essence and Implications of Missio Dei: An Appraisal of Today's Foremost Theology of Missions*. (Ancaster: Alev, 2017).

partnerships between the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches'.<sup>33</sup> The aims of God for All are summarised in five bullet-points:

- God for All calls for change. Traditional models of church are still important but together we must explore new styles and expression of church, and ways of serving and witnessing to our communities.
- God for All promotes unity. Through inter-denominational work, churches will come together in new mission communities – creating networks of support, encouragement and growth.
- God for All has purpose. Everyone should have the chance to discover more of God and His purpose for their lives and church communities should feel emboldened and enlivened at the prospect of sharing in this.
- God for All looks long term, through new forms of outreach, new mission-focused workers and consideration of the best use of our buildings. God for All is about the future.
- God for All has direction. The Strategy Group's work to resource, support and communicate will ensure mission is at the centre of all we do for the next five years and beyond.<sup>34</sup>

In concluding that '... mission is at the centre of everything that we do' as well as aiming to enable all people in Cumbria to have the opportunity to 'become followers of Jesus within a Christian community',<sup>35</sup> God for All's interpretation of mission appears to have a strongly evangelistic tone, which may not resonate well with chaplains in Cumbria.

## *2.4 Policy Documents*

This subheading identifies two principal policy documents which developed from four other publications. In addition, there is one other influential

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<sup>33</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "God for All", [cited 28 November 2015]. Online: <http://www.godforall.org.uk/the-aim/>

<sup>34</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "God for All".

<sup>35</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, 'God for All'.

published paper which is not quite a policy document, but is highly relevant and, in its revised form, coincides with the timing of principal policies. It is 'Chaplaincy and Discipleship'.<sup>36</sup>

Chaplaincy and Discipleship was first published in 2011, and then revised in 2014 to coincide with God for All. The paper openly acknowledges that there is no clarity about how chaplains relate to a diocesan vision of growing disciples through evangelism. It asserts that chaplaincy can be seen as pre-evangelism – a setting in place of relationships before evangelism is possible. My observation of this document is that it supports the evangelistic direction of God for All, at the same time as reflects the understanding why some chaplains are uncomfortable with the emphasis. This awareness will have a significant input into the recommendations found in the Conclusion to this piece of work. Four other documents have helped to shape the final policies. The first is 'A Strategy for Ministry in Cumbria: Explanatory Memorandum'.<sup>37</sup>

The Explanatory Memorandum prepares the ground prior to distributing the strategy to deaneries and ecumenical partners for the purpose of receiving feedback. Its aim is to clarify features of the strategy and the intent behind it, as well as considering aspects of implementation. It would appear to have been a wise move to send this out in advance of the strategy, evidenced by the large volume of feedback received. Very soon

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<sup>36</sup> Pratt, 'Chaplaincy and Discipleship'.

<sup>37</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "A Ministry Strategy in Cumbria – Explanatory Memorandum". [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/933/Paper\\_Ciii\\_A\\_Ministry\\_Strategy\\_in\\_Cumbria\\_Explanatory\\_Memorandum.pdf.html](https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/933/Paper_Ciii_A_Ministry_Strategy_in_Cumbria_Explanatory_Memorandum.pdf.html)



after this explanatory memorandum, 'A Strategy for Ministry in Cumbria' was distributed.<sup>38</sup>

The strategy document, whilst brief in detail, gives a broad overview of the background before offering some points relating to Mission Community leaders (both lay and ordained). It goes on to outline how the communities may be formed and, ultimately, defines the stages of transition in accordance with the following illustration:<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "A Strategy for Ministry in Cumbria". [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/932/Paper\\_Cii\\_A\\_Strategy\\_for\\_Ministry\\_in\\_Cumbria.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/932/Paper_Cii_A_Strategy_for_Ministry_in_Cumbria.pdf.html)

<sup>39</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, God for All. Forming Mission Communities – the Stages", [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: <https://www.godforall.org.uk/forming-mission-communities---the-stages.html>

Explore: establishing which inter-denominational churches will form the mission community; how it will initially be governed and led; establishing local leadership wherever possible in the local churches; working together on initial plans for mission and, consider how to celebrate the launch of the mission community.

**Launch:** when plans have sufficiently come together is the time to formally "launch" the mission community - the point at which work together starts in earnest. It is a bit like baptism: we want the Spirit to descend on all those involved and, like a baptism, it is an opportunity for celebration.



**Transition:** the 'working together' in new ways really starts, particularly new mission initiatives; developing relationships, finding out what works, what needs to be done differently. It's a period of change, growth and coming together, building an enhanced vision for the future and discovering new confidence and strengths in people and new leaders.



**Commission:** the point at which all the boxes (or at least most of them) have been ticked and the mission community and all the local churches and congregations are firing on all cylinders. By this stage there will be a clear view of the future, of how things will operate and what needs to be done to ensure that the future is sustainable.



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observations of 'Chaplaincy and Discipleship', is that visually it relates to church building models. This may be the cause of some disconnect with chaplains. Some further causes for concern are reflected in 'Ministry Strategy – Feedback from Parishes and Others'.<sup>40</sup>

The feedback document is comprehensive. Feedback was received from over 100 churches, gatherings and individuals. This resulted in over 100,000 words of feedback, which are summarised in the document under three headings: strengths, concerns and suggestions. The feedback paper reflected some of the issues that arose from the thematic analysis for this research – although it is not clear which comments were from chaplains. Having gathered all the feedback, 'Ministry Strategy Feedback and Advisory Group: Final Report of the Group' was published.<sup>41</sup>

The Final Report, whilst acknowledging that there are significant risks associated with the implementation of the strategy, concluded that an amended Strategy for Ministry would be presented to Diocesan Synod with a recommendation that it should be approved. An observation from the perspective of this research is that, at that time, many of the deaneries were still expressing some of the same concerns as chaplains. Appleby Deanery alluded to Methodists not working to the same time scale.<sup>42</sup> Barrow Deanery spoke of the fear of Methodists and URC being swallowed up by the Church

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<sup>40</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "Ministry Strategy – Feedback", [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/678/Ministry\\_Strategy\\_Feedback\\_from\\_parishes\\_and\\_others\\_October\\_2013.pdf.html](https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/678/Ministry_Strategy_Feedback_from_parishes_and_others_October_2013.pdf.html)

<sup>41</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "MSAFG Final Report", [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

<sup>42</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "MSAFG Final Report", 4 [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

of England.<sup>43</sup> Brampton Deanery expressed the view that ‘the Methodists and URC are a dying breed, and we may be better off without them’.<sup>44</sup> Calder Deanery said that there were still ecumenical issues to be resolved.<sup>45</sup> Carlisle Deanery expressed the overall view that the strategy had not been well received.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, the strategy was approved and resulted in one of the principal policy documents: ‘Better at Being Church in Every Community: A Strategy for Ministry’.<sup>47</sup>

Better at Being Church is the forerunner to God for All. It is a combined strategy between URC, Methodist and Anglican Churches (the Salvation Army, at this stage, had not joined the covenant partnership). It sets out a direction of travel that sits very comfortably within a Receptive Ecumenism framework. It stresses the need to be willing to give up what is held dear, and to work with a missional mindset which accepts new understandings of ministry. However, the document omits all of the tensions that the previously mentioned Final Report acknowledges. Also, there is no reference to much in the way of models of ministry outside of a church context. The reasons for this can be seen in previous subheading 2.2 (Receptive Ecumenism), where senior denominational figures were asked, ‘At the planning stage (for Ecumenical Mission Communities), what was your

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<sup>43</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “MSAFG Final Report”, 5 [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

<sup>44</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “MSAFG Final Report”, 5 [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

<sup>45</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “MSAFG Final Report”, 5 [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

<sup>46</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “MSAFG Final Report”, 6 [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper\\_Ci\\_-\\_MSFAG\\_Final\\_Report.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/931/Paper_Ci_-_MSFAG_Final_Report.pdf.html)

<sup>47</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “Strategy for Ministry”, [cited 10 September 2019]. Online: [https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/680/Strategy\\_for\\_Ministry-version-1.pdf.html](https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/uploads/680/Strategy_for_Ministry-version-1.pdf.html)

understanding of the theological vision and place of chaplains within the strategy?’ A summary of their combined replies is that, although there was an awareness of the large number of chaplains in Cumbria, they were not given any specific consideration at the planning stage. They were simply considered to be an equally important part of the whole picture. This is a similar position with God for All, which is, in effect, the other principal policy document.

The detail of God for All is found in subheading 2.3. It is the evangelistic direction of the document which appears to cause some concern to chaplains. Responses indicate that chaplains feel disconnected from this method. As responses to surveys, questionnaires and interviews show, chaplains view their ministry as incarnational. It has already been stated that this research is based on the ontological premise that, if Christian chaplaincy is incarnational, then God must be in that place. The fact that God for All is the principal policy document on which ecumenical Mission Communities are based appears to have unsettled chaplains, and therefore contributes to their perception of being disconnected from the developing Mission Communities. Whilst Better at Being Church and God for All are the principal policy documents, they have not sprung-up out of a sudden realisation that the church in Cumbria needs to move from survival to revival. A number of early influences have contributed to this direction of travel over a period of time.

## 2.5 Early Influences

Other influences have contributed to the debate about sustainability in rural dioceses. A report of the Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas published 'Faith in the Countryside' in 1990.<sup>48</sup> The report, whilst welcomed in many quarters for its identification of uniquely rural concerns, did not identify any significant issues in maintaining the current structure. Andrew Bowden is the first to make the link between some of the gaps in Faith in the Countryside and the positive way that the Diocese of Carlisle engaged with it:

The short report is an excellent summary; but inevitably, because it is a summary, it fails to capture the imagination. Where (in Carlisle Diocese) deanery study groups have invested many hours in determined study of the report, the 'vision' has been perceived and 'the converted' are already busy converting others: but this has only happened as a result of two years of unremitting and imaginative preparatory work by the Diocesan Rural Officer.<sup>49</sup>

It might also be suggested that Bowden's observation of the ecumenical developments arising from the Carlisle studies was somewhat prophetic when he made the statement,

At this stage it is too early to predict whether the latest round of Anglican-Methodist talks will lead to practical changes at grassroots level: but most rural congregations of both denominations are only too aware of the folly of Christian disunity. There are no longer the resources or the stomach for more than one Christian presence in each settlement.<sup>50</sup>

Apparently, Bowden and the former Bishop of Penrith were thinking the same thing at the same time regarding restructuring on ecumenical lines,

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<sup>48</sup> Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas. *Faith in the Countryside: Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas*. (London: ACORA, 1990).

<sup>49</sup> Andrew Bowden, *Ministry in the Countryside: A Model for the Future*. (London: Continuum, 2003), 5.

<sup>50</sup> Bowden, *Ministry*, xxviii.

since their observations were both published in 2003. There is no evidence that one author was influenced by the other.

Whilst all of the above traces the development of Mission Communities, notwithstanding the observations of the former Bishop of Penrith and Bowden, it lacks a rationale: a linking of the documented development of thought processes and practice. My research identifies a gap in formal documentation and minutes of meetings.<sup>51</sup> However, one of the primary drivers of the initiative, a senior Anglican, has offered the following view of their perspective of the thinking behind, and evolution of Mission Communities.

## *2.6 Addressing the Gap in Minutes of Development Meetings*

Respondent A1 @i77 recalled that the earliest influence on the initiative was the 1983 'A Strategy for the Church's Ministry', which became known colloquially as the 'Tiller Report'. Chapter 8 (Shared Ministry) of the Tiller Report asks the question, 'Who is a Minister?' and then goes on to outline a theme of revolution in traditional thinking.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, a more significant contributor in terms of radical thinking may have been Robin Gill's 'Beyond Decline', the abstract of which states:

Perhaps the most obvious thing one can say about the churches in Britain today is that they are declining. The facts are evident. However, responses to that decline vary considerably, and Robin Gill, parish priest and theologian as well as sociologist,

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<sup>51</sup> The minutes of the lead-up to the implementation of Mission Communities were not made available to me. Consequently, the remainder of this tracing of the development of Mission Communities is dependent solely upon the oral input of respondent A1 @i77, a senior Anglican clergyperson who attended all the minuted meetings.

<sup>52</sup> John Tiller, *A Strategy for the Church's Ministry*. (London: Church Information Office, 1983), 65.

has written to challenge some of them. Dr Gill begins by examining the way in which decline has led to what he argues is a disastrous anti-intellectualism within the churches. Then he goes on to examine ways in which declining churches are tempted to compensate by pressing for general assemblies and synods to make specific moral and social pronouncements. A third chapter sets out alternative and sometimes incompatible options for Christians to engage in moral and social issues. A fourth chapter examines competing models of evangelism and church growth. In the fifth chapter Dr Gill analyses clergy deployment within declining British churches. Concluding that churches are not deploying clergy in the most effective way to counter decline, he suggests a radical model for deployment to edge the churches beyond decline. The book ends with a vision of faith beyond decline.<sup>53</sup>

In practical terms, the first experimentation with Mission Communities in the Diocese of Carlisle took place in South Calder. This area ranges from Egremont in the north, to just beyond Bootle in the south, and inland as far as Nether Wasdale, covering approximately 200 square miles. However, perhaps because of the remote location and the enormousness of the task, many vacancies could not be filled. Respondent A1@i77 believes that alongside this, locally there was a distinct lack of strong leadership and eventually, on the grounds that it was just too big an area, the parish of Eskdale withdrew. Thus, what was to be the flagship of addressing Gill's 'theory of deploying clergy in the most effective way to counter decline' had failed by 2009.

The fall of the 'South Calder experiment' in 2009 coincided with the retirement of the Bishop of Carlisle, who was succeeded by the former Bishop of Penrith who, in 2003 had identified the need for change and published 'Principles for Mission Units'.<sup>54</sup> Early in his episcopacy he initiated

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<sup>53</sup> Robin Gill, *Beyond Decline: A Challenge to the Churches*. (London: SCM, 1988).

<sup>54</sup> Newcome, *Principles*.



discussions around a diocesan vision, and in 2011 'Growing Disciples – Vision and Strategy: 2011-2020' was published.<sup>55</sup>

Prior to publication of 'Growing Disciples', which became known colloquially as 'The Green Booklet', senior Anglicans on the bishop's staff discussed what the title of the new groups might be. Respondent A1@i77, being on the bishop's staff, recalled early discussions being wary that 'communities' was an ambiguous term and open to many interpretations (especially in the light of the way that politicians had chosen to use it over the years). Other adjectives were explored, amongst them 'Mission Clusters' and 'Mission Federations'. In the end though, they finally settled on 'Mission Communities'. This Green Booklet was distributed widely amongst clergy and congregations, and was the first hint that the diocese was revisiting the South Calder model, but with an emphasis very much on 'light-touch' implementation. At some point in its development, however, the tone moved from 'voluntary participation at your own pace' to a more decisive, 'engagement with the initiative is obligatory for all who wish to exercise a ministry in this diocese'.

Respondent A1@i77 could not be clear about how or when this transition of emphasis came about, or even whether it was an executive decision, or just something that the diocese had drifted into. From my own perspective as a chaplain practitioner, the hardening process appeared to coincide with the appointment of a new Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness. The new archdeacon came to Carlisle from the Diocese of Exeter,

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<sup>55</sup> Diocese of Carlisle. *Growing Disciples - Vision and Strategy*, 2011.

where Mission Communities were already well established, albeit not ecumenically. The archdeacon had been part of the implementation team in that diocese, and recruited to Carlisle specifically for their skills and knowledge in that area of ministry. The new Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness had assigned to their portfolio the Ministry Strategy, which has at its core the deployment of clergy, and thereafter (coincidentally or not) the resolve to forcibly implement Mission Communities appeared to grow more robust.

In terms of clergy deployment, some decisions had to be made, in the light of the South Calder failure, about what was too large and what was too small for a Mission Community. To assist the thinking around this, some of the principles from the Healthy Churches Handbook were enlisted.<sup>56</sup> Having in mind that isolating clergy is something that should be avoided, those driving Mission Communities (at this point, still only Anglicans on the bishop's senior leadership team) lighted on the principle that there will never be only one full-time clergyperson in a Mission Community – always at least two. So, given that it is envisaged by the bishop's senior leadership team that the diocese will ultimately lose 20% of its clergy (round that up to one-third), then it must seek to have three full-time clergy in each Mission Community in the early stages to allow for a cut of one of those full-time posts, thus protecting the principle of having at least two full-timers in post after the necessary cuts have been made.

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Warren, *Healthy Churches Handbook* (London: Church House, 2004).

Having established the ground rules for the establishment of Mission Communities purely within an Anglican context, the stage was set for boundaries and clergy personnel to be identified and progress made towards the first commissioning. However, somewhere around 2013/2014, observes respondent A1 @i77, a drift was detected away from the 'Five Marks of Discipleship' of the Growing Disciples document<sup>57</sup> towards the previously cited 'God for All' evangelistic strategy, which began its timeline at the end of 2014. It is suggested, by a source that cannot be reliably established, that it was at this time that a significant gear-shift was made towards this being an ecumenical project, rather than the purely Anglican model of Mission Communities that had, by now, become established in the Diocese of Exeter. Whilst it cannot be evidenced from the minutes (simply because they have not been made available), respondent A1 @i77 perceived from their own attendance at the meetings that it was the Bishop of Carlisle who was the main ecumenical driver, whilst the Bishop of Penrith was less keen. The same respondent said that the minutes would show that all three archdeacons of the diocese at that time expressed that they could envisage significant problems with an ecumenical proposal. By whatever means, Mission Communities veered towards ecumenism, and regardless of who was driving the ecumenical agenda, the result was stalled momentum: Anglicans were expressing their reservations to the archdeacons. According to respondent A1 @i77, despite misgivings being expressed from all

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<sup>57</sup> Diocese of Carlisle. *Growing Disciples – Vision and Strategy: 2011-2020*. Carlisle: Church House, 2010. The Five Marks of Discipleship in the document are: Maturity in Faith; Expectant Prayer and Lively Worship; Community Service and Engagement; Evangelism; Quality of Relationships.

denominations, there was a growing impression that the options were few. It was observed that when Methodists cannot get a minister, they merge circuits; when Roman Catholics cannot replace a priest, they close the church. In the light of this evidence, the strong belief emerged that the only alternative to closing churches would be to form Mission Communities. In January 2016, the first ecumenical Mission Community was commissioned.<sup>58</sup>

The perception of respondent A1@i77 is that the denominational landscape, as it stands, sees the URC as the most gracious and willing to be adaptable to ecumenical models: Anglicans have a degree of suspicion about the others 'hanging-on' to them in order not to become totally extinct; the Methodists are the most unsettled and fear an Anglican takeover; the Salvation Army are somewhat enigmatic, and it is unclear how or why they have entered into a partnership with denominations whose sacramental positions they cannot share – not least of which is because the Salvation Army are centrally administered and therefore there is no authority to negotiate local agreements. The speculative view of respondent A1@i77 is that the implications of this complex landscape are that between 2030 and 2040, Mission Communities would probably have evolved into a new denomination. Not that Anglicanism would have been lost; there would simply

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<sup>58</sup> Diocese of Carlisle. 'Cumbria celebrates first commissioning of a Mission Community'. January 2016 [cited 25 May 2018]. Online: [www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/news/1594/61/Cumbria-celebrates-first-commissioning-of-a-mission-community.html](http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/news/1594/61/Cumbria-celebrates-first-commissioning-of-a-mission-community.html)

This press release heralds the commissioning of the first ecumenical Mission Community. It notes that the Binsey Mission Community covers 250 square miles, taking in the Lake District Northern fells, right up to the Solway Plain. It includes twelve Anglican churches and a Methodist chapel. Chapter 4 (subheading 4.3.1) observes the similarity of characteristics between Binsey and the 2005/6 South Calder experiment, which it is believed failed due to its remoteness and vast geographical area (200 square miles).

be 'interchangeability'. However, this cannot now happen because of the late addition of the Salvation Army to the covenant and their inability to make local decisions, as well as their rejection of sacraments. More likely now, by 2030 the URC will have disappeared due to lack of finance, and the Methodists will withdraw due to lack of real heart and commitment to the initiative at grassroots level. Away from these 'insider' views there is little tangible supporting evidence. Respondent A1@i77 wished to conclude with four, brief thoughts, which they believed might impact the developing ecumenical Mission Communities.

First, it may have been better to stay with the Five Marks originally identified in the Growing Disciples – Vision and Strategy, rather than focus the emphasis on evangelism through God for All. This came about through the Bishop of Penrith suggesting that the Five Marks was too wide a scope and that one part of it (evangelism) should be emphasised for a season.

Second, the reason why there is now an insistence that all (Anglicans at least) participate in the Mission Communities initiative is that churches cannot be allowed to work in isolation. The main opposition to this is coming from the larger, financially sound urban churches who struggle to grasp that where clergy are being reduced across the county (due to a lack of applicants, as well as not being able to afford them), there has to be fairness and equality of deployment – which also means fairness and equality in cuts. The strong (evangelical?) churches must be prevented from exercising a form of protectionism.

Third, nationally, the Church of England is emerging at two speeds. Broadly, the strong and wealthy churches of the South-East have no real need to make any changes. Yet, the 'Coastal Fringe' (Carlisle, Exeter, Truro and others), are being forced to rethink their deployment of clergy and the shape of their congregations.

Fourth, it may be an ongoing mistake to believe that more clergy equals stronger churches. After all, the Diocese of Carlisle has the largest ratio of clergy to population; yet still the Anglican Church in Cumbria is in decline.<sup>59</sup> We have continually to be prepared to change as the Mission Community vista opens up before us.<sup>60</sup>

Whilst the objective contributions from respondent A1@i77 serve to fill in the gaps from the minutes that were unavailable, none of the four concluding points could be evidenced with any degree of accuracy, and therefore carry less weight to the overall line of argument. They are included to illustrate a rounded picture of the contribution from respondent A1@i77. It might be argued that two things could be added to this orally recalled developmental history. The first is Butland's observation: 'Tripartite

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<sup>59</sup> Church of England. "Research and Statistics", [cited 25 May 2018]. Online: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/research-and-statistics/key-areas-research#ministry-statistics>

Cumbria Intelligence Observatory. "Population", [cited 25 May 2018]. Online: <https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/population/>

Church of England figures show a total of 114 stipendiary parochial and non-parochial clergy in the Diocese of Carlisle in 2016. The population of Cumbria at that time, estimated by Office for National Statistics (ONS) and published by Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, is 497,906 people of all ages. Church of England research statistics show that the total area of Cumbria is 2,570 square miles, and that the total population equates to 190 people of all ages per square mile. In terms of decline, the Church of England research statistics show the following attendance figures: 2011- 10,800; 2012- 10,600; 2013- 10,800; 2014- 10,100; 2015- 9,800; 2016- 9,700. Whilst these figures do evidence a decline in the Anglican church in Cumbria, they do not give us a comparison with church strength ratios across the whole country.

<sup>60</sup> Summarised from an interview with respondent A1@i77, 10 February 2017.

conversations reached agreement in three areas: shared mission, common ministry and imaginative use of buildings'.<sup>61</sup> This consensus resulted in the signing of the carefully worded statement, 'Ecumenical County of Cumbria: A Declaration of Intent by the Methodist, United Reformed and Anglican Churches'. Butland is at pains to note that:

The wording of this statement was painstakingly prepared, taken to the three denominational synods, checked out with national church bodies and eventually agreed ... the significance of this moment of signing should not be underestimated ... in addition to the three denominational leaders ... the presence of church leaders from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lancaster, Church of Scotland, Salvation Army, Society of Friends and Baptist churches lent real credibility to this being an ecumenical county. The only omissions from the Christian family were representatives of the free and independent churches, but representatives of these churches now also meet with other denominational leaders annually for prayer and discussion.<sup>62</sup>

The second, also from Butland, is the formation of the Covenant Partnership in an Extended Area (CPEA), which formed from an ecumenical task group appointed to manage comments, suggestions and objections. Butland acknowledges that the responses were, '... varied and complicated ... there were some areas of resistance and apathy ... (and a) ... sceptical series of synods'.<sup>63</sup>

Comparing respondent A1 @i77 and Butland, who both attended the meetings, Butland adopts a more positive outlook for Mission Communities as they develop, following the eventual signing of the Declaration.<sup>64</sup> He asserts, 'In making the ecumenical county a reality, these steps are fundamental; local groups now have the freedom and permission to work

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<sup>61</sup> Cameron Butland, *Growing Spirituality* (Peterborough: Open Spirituality, 2017), 12.

<sup>62</sup> Butland, *Growing Spirituality*, 12.

<sup>63</sup> Butland, *Growing Spirituality*, 14.

<sup>64</sup> Appendix 8 – Covenant Partnership in an Extended Area.

together in shared Mission and Ministry'.<sup>65</sup> At this early stage of Mission Community development, it is not possible to evidence whether or not this aspiration of liberty is shared at grassroots level. Research for this study from amongst chaplains in Cumbria though, shows that there are strong opinions from that sector, both positive and negative.

## *2.6 Timeline Summary of Development*

1983: John Tiller publishes 'A Strategy for the Churches Ministry', outlining a theme of revolution in traditional thinking.

1988: Robin Gill publishes 'Beyond Decline: A Challenge to the Churches', concluding that churches are not deploying clergy in the most effective way to counter decline.

1990: 'Faith in the Countryside'. Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas.

2003: Bishop of Penrith publishes 'Principles for Mission Units'.

2003: Andrew Bowden publishes the second edition of 'Ministry in the Countryside: A Model for the Future', identifying the Diocese of Carlisle's positive engagement with new models of ministry following 'Faith in the Countryside'.

2005/6: Prototype Mission Community established in South Calder.

2009: South Calder Mission Community experiment discontinued.

2009: Bishop of Carlisle retired and is succeeded by the Bishop of Penrith who, to this point, has been the main driver behind reorganisation.

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<sup>65</sup> Butland, *Growing Spirituality*, 15.



- 2011: Ecumenical County of Cumbria: A Declaration of Intent. Signed by the Methodist, United Reformed and Anglican Churches on 27 November, 2011.
- 2011: 'Growing Disciples – Vision and Strategy 2011-2020' published, identifying Five Marks of Discipleship.
- 2012: New Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness appointed, partially on the basis of their experience in the setting up of non-ecumenical Mission Communities in the Diocese of Exeter.
- 2013/14: Policy decision made to move away from the 'Five Marks' of the Vision and Strategy document, to a greater emphasis on evangelism through 'God for All'.
- 2014: First Declaration of Covenant Partnership, signed by Anglican, Methodist and URC.
- 2016: Salvation Army join the Covenant Partnership. On 27 November 2016, in Carlisle Cathedral, a signing ceremony took place, which saw the Church of England, Methodist Church, URC and Salvation Army sign together a new Declaration of Covenant Partnership.
- 2016: First ecumenical Mission Community (Binsey) is commissioned.

### 3. SURVEYING THE QUANTITATIVE LANDSCAPE

This chapter discusses the quantitative element of the choice of mixed-methods methodology. It begins by identifying which personnel are within the scope of this research, and then illustrating the proportional composition by denomination. The data collected from those in scope is then reproduced without edit or amendment. This is to allow chaplains to identify their own contribution in order to meet the previously stated desired outcome: that this study might influence and contribute to the way that chaplains engage and function after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this thesis. The chapter concludes by illustrating the pursuit of a possible misconception at the research-design stage and then offering some explanation of why Cumbria, and chaplains in Cumbria, are significantly under-represented in terms of diversity.

#### *3.1 Scope of Inclusion*

The term 'chaplaincy' has not been easy to define. Is the title of chaplain restricted to those who are ordained (or otherwise authorised by their church) to exercise a ministry hosted by a national institution, such as the armed forces, prisons or hospitals; or is it equally acceptable that lay persons can be chaplains in a non-parochial environment, such as youth organisations and sports clubs? As well as the ambiguity concerning the status of chaplains and which posts can legitimately be called chaplaincy, there is also confusion regarding who resources, authorises and supervises chaplaincy posts. Adding further to the uncertainty is the question of competency: can anyone

in a pastoral role outside of a church context label themselves as a chaplain, or is it first necessary to receive some form of training and/or commissioning? If one adds the question of 'what does a chaplain do?' to this list, then it is reasonable to suggest that there is no consensus of opinion, or clarity, in how 'chaplain' is defined.

However, for the purpose of this study I have chosen to define chaplains as all those with a Christian ministry outside of a parish or other church setting. Having established a clear definition, this research has had to set its own boundaries of which roles and personnel will be included in the scope of chaplaincy. The guiding sources of information for these have been:

1. Crockford's Anglican Clerical Directory:<sup>66</sup> This is a definitive guide to Anglican clergy and churches in the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church. Whilst it is the most organised and prescriptive of the information sources available, its weakness as a source of information for this research is that entries in the directory are self-reported, rather than ascertained from diocesan offices. Clergy can choose whether or not to submit an entry. Some ministers elect only to register their main function. Those parish priests who are also part-time chaplains to another host organisation may opt to view their chaplaincy role as a subset of their parochial duties, on the basis that their chaplaincy involvement sits within the parish boundary.

2. Diocese of Carlisle Anglican Directory:<sup>67</sup> This directory has proved to be more appropriate than Crockford's, in that it has a specific chaplaincy

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<sup>66</sup> Church of England, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (London: Church House, 2016).

<sup>67</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, *Diocese of Carlisle Directory 2016* (Carlisle: Church House, 2016).

section. However, whilst working through it, many inaccuracies were found as there was not, until a recent appointment, anyone co-ordinating chaplaincy in the diocese.

3. Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle: The Bishop of Carlisle approved and licensed as an honorary post the role of Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle in May 2016. That post is currently held by me. It is a co-ordinating and supporting resource offered by the diocese to recognised chaplains of any Mission Community partner denomination. In practice, two directories are evolving. One limits registry to those chaplains who represent the Mission Community denominations, and is overseen by me. The other is a fuller list of all known chaplains and, at the time of publication, was being steered by the Development Officer for Churches Together in Cumbria.

4. Anglican Archdeacon of West Cumberland: During the research period the Archdeacon of West Cumberland nominally held the portfolio for Anglican chaplains within the diocese. However, for a significant period of time this cleric was also fulfilling the duties of two other archdeacons during an interregnum and therefore, by their own admission, not giving the time to chaplaincy that they would have liked to. Nevertheless, they provided for the research a great deal of local knowledge pertinent to individuals and chaplaincy posts within their remit.

5. Chair of the Methodist District: The Methodist Church has a long history of involvement with chaplaincy. The District Chair was able to provide detail of the development of chaplaincy from a Methodist perspective within Cumbria, as well as identifying individual Methodist chaplains.

6. URC Cumbria Area President: The URC in Cumbria is relatively small. The Area President was therefore able to provide names and posts of the limited number of chaplains within their regional presidency.

7. Salvation Army North-Western Divisional Commanders: This is a joint post that covers a large area of the North-West of England, far greater than the area on which the research focuses. It may be for this reason that the information provided was scant and, in some places, inaccurate.

From the corpus of information gained from the above sources, the following chaplaincies have been included in the scope of the research: Agricultural; Arts; Care Homes; Civic; Educational; Emergency Services; Healthcare; Industrial; Mothers' Union; Prisons; Retail; Sports; Street Pastors/Urban; Youth Organisations.

Whilst the nature of chaplaincy is fluid - new chaplains are being appointed whilst others leave to take up other duties - the statistics that follow all relate to the chaplaincy picture as it stood on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016.

### *3.2 Enquiry One – Denominational Snapshot of Included Chaplains*

From 74 chaplains within scope, 22 chose to respond to this first enquiry, representing 30% of the total. These were made up of:

46 Anglicans, representative of 62% of the total.





17 Methodists, representative of 23% of the total.



4 URC, representative of 5% of the total.


2 Salvation Army, representative of 3% of the total.

5 'Others', representative of 7% of the total.<sup>68</sup>

The responses are illustrated below.


1. In which age range do you belong?				
			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Under 20		0.00%	0
2	20-30		0.00%	0
3	31-40		0.00%	0
4	41-50		9.09%	2
5	51-60		27.27%	6
6	61-70		54.55%	12
7	Over 70		9.09%	2
8	Prefer not to say		0.00%	0

2. How do you describe your gender?				
			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Male		63.64%	14
2	Female		36.36%	8
3	Transgender		0.00%	0
4	Not listed		0.00%	0
5	Prefer not to say		0.00%	0


3. How do you describe your sexuality?				
			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Heterosexual/Straight		95.45%	21
2	Homosexual (gay/lesbian)		0.00%	0
3	Bisexual		0.00%	0

<sup>68</sup> 'Others' includes those who are not of the partner denominations, but under the auspices of, or working inextricably with, one or more of the partners. For example, respondent O1@i43 is a Baptist (not part of the Mission Community covenant) employed in a chaplaincy role funded by the Methodist Church.



### 3. How do you describe your sexuality?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
4	Other		0.00%	0
5	Prefer not to say		4.55%	1





### 4. How would you describe your ethnic group or background?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	White - All groups		100.00%	22
2	Mixed - Any mixed multiple ethnic group		0.00%	0
3	Asian/Asian British		0.00%	0
4	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British		0.00%	0
5	Any other ethnic group		0.00%	0
6	Prefer not to say		0.00%	0

### 5. Do you consider yourself to have any form of recognised disability?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes		9.09%	2
2	No		90.91%	20

### 6. In which field(s) do you exercise your chaplaincy?<sup>69</sup>

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Agricultural		13.64%	3
2	Arts		0.00%	0
3	Care Homes		9.09%	2
4	Civic/Law Courts		0.00%	0
5	Emergency Services		9.09%	2
6	Health Care		36.36%	8
7	Industrial		0.00%	0

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted that the number of recorded responses to Question 6 exceeds the number of chaplains (22) who chose to respond. This is because some chaplains exercise a ministry in more than one area. For the same reason, the total percentages exceed 100.

## 6. In which field(s) do you exercise your chaplaincy?<sup>69</sup>

			Response Per cent	Response Total
8	Military Cadet Forces		9.09%	2
9	Mothers' Union		4.55%	1
10	Prisons		4.55%	1
11	Retail		4.55%	1
12	Schools, Colleges and Universities		9.09%	2
13	Sports		9.09%	2
14	Street/Community		4.55%	1
15	Urban		4.55%	1
16	Youth Groups		4.55%	1
17	Other than those listed above		18.18%	4

## 7. Do you have any ministry alongside your chaplaincy, for example, parish responsibility?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes		68.18%	15
2	No		31.82%	7

## 8. How long have you been a chaplain?




			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Less than 1 year		4.55%	1
2	Between 1 and 3 years		22.73%	5
3	Between 3 and 6 years		18.18%	4
4	Between 6 and 9 years		13.64%	3
5	Between 9 and 12 years		13.64%	3
6	Between 12 and 15 years		22.73%	5
7	Over 15 years		4.55%	1

## 9. To which religious denomination do you associate yourself?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	United Reformed Church		9.09%	2






### 9. To which religious denomination do you associate yourself?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
2	Methodist		18.18%	4
3	Anglican		63.64%	14
4	Salvation Army		0.00%	0
5	Other		9.09%	2



### 10. What is your ministry status?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Ordained		86.36%	19
2	Lay		13.64%	3




### 11. Have you been through any kind of commissioning process by your denomination to recognise your chaplaincy role?





			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes		40.91%	9
2	No		54.55%	12
3	Don't know		4.55%	1

### 12. Have you received any specific chaplaincy training?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes		72.73%	16
2	No		27.27%	6
3	Don't know		0.00%	0

### 13. How would you describe your terms of chaplaincy ministry?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Full-time paid		9.09%	2
2	Full-time voluntary		0.00%	0
3	Part-time paid		31.82%	7
4	Part-time voluntary		59.09%	13

14. Noting the introductory letter, consent and data protection attachments, would you be willing to engage in a one-hour interview with a researcher or follow-up questionnaire?					
				Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes – Interview			31.82%	7
2	Yes - Follow-up questionnaire			22.73%	5
3	Yes - Interview and questionnaire			22.73%	5
4	No			22.73%	5

### *3.3 Enquiry Two – Qualitative Questions and Responses*

In total, 74 chaplains make up the above groups. All, prior to the first enquiry, were sent a pack containing:

- A letter of invitation
- A participant information sheet
- A consent form
- A questionnaire

The questionnaire made clear that those who chose to return electronically or by hard copy could be identified by the researcher. In addition, also attached was a link to SmartSurvey™ offering the opportunity to return totally anonymously, notwithstanding any identifying information that the respondent may choose to divulge. By whichever method the return came, anonymity in the final report was assured.

The primary objective of the questionnaire was to prepare the ground to receive and analyse qualitative data by asking a uniform series of

questions. From this second enquiry there were 31 responses in total, representing 42% of all 74 chaplains.

8 chose to reply by email or hard copy, breaking down into:

6 Methodists, 1 Anglican, and 1 'other'. Of these, 3 respondents exercised their ministry in agriculture, 2 in education, 1 in emergency services, 1 in healthcare and 1 was currently unattached.

9 opted to respond by personal interview, breaking down into:

5 Anglicans, 2 United Reformed, 1 Methodist and 1 'other'. Of these, 3 were in education, 2 in healthcare, 1 in agriculture, 1 in emergency services, 1 in arts and 1 in civic chaplaincy.

Whilst the email/hardcopy and personal interview responses produced many pages of transcripts (which are available, but not included due to word-count restriction), 14 responded with greater brevity using the anonymous SmartSurvey™ software. These are included below without comment, correction or amendment. Arising out of a manually conducted thematic analysis, the issues arising from these are broadly reflective of the email/hard copy and personal interview responses.<sup>70</sup>

**1. Will you describe your chaplaincy role (in context) and give a short pen-picture of yourself, your ministry, and your faith tradition (including your denomination).**

Chaplain to ATC. Church of England. 30 years' Service  
Chaplain.

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<sup>70</sup> An analysis of the issues can be seen in Chapters 6-11.

One-half of a chaplaincy team at Lakes College West Cumbria. I am a URC minister of 17 years' experience. I have had a voluntary sessional chaplaincy role at the college for about 12 years. The level of input has gone up and down over the years and at the moment is a fairly token presence in terms of chaplaincy. I also teach a few hours a week at the college and it is interesting how sometimes this facilitates and sometimes complicates the chaplaincy role.

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School Chaplain. Chaplain to a senior school of 540 pupils and staff (teaching & support) plus prep school.

Reservist RAF Chaplain. Committed to about a month a year working alongside regular RAF chaplains.

Prior to current role served for 7 years in parish ministry and taught for 4 years before that.

Church of England: evangelical.

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I work as Chaplain in a Methodist Independent Living with Care Home in Penrith (though I am an Anglican priest) There are 57 residents, some of them are very frail, others of them are still very independent. I visit them all, offering pastoral and spiritual care, listening to their stories, sharing their joys and sorrows, and often praying for them. My ministry includes a lot of one to one work, but also bringing residents together for services of worship, meditations and both fun and serious activities. I seek to build up a sense of community.

I am an Anglican priest, and I also work as an Associate Priest at a church in Keswick. My other main ministry is working in spiritual direction, leading retreats, and teaching courses on prayer and Christian spirituality. This is my passion. Sometimes my Chaplaincy work and my spirituality work relate together - the residents enjoy meditations and some of them want to talk in depth about their spiritual journey.

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I have been a voluntary chaplain since 2000 going into visit patients mainly in the Westmorland General Hospital in Kendal just one day a week.

I was a Reader in the Church of England in 2000 and had been since 1996, I completed the Ordination Course and licensed in 2011, since when I have worked as an NSM or Self Supporting Minister. I retired from being a Head Teacher, then went into Teacher Training whilst also doing Supply Teaching.

My faith tradition has always been in the Church of England.

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I have held a developing role in Healthcare Chaplaincy for the past 25 years.

I am Anglican by denomination. My Ministry within the Hospital context has always been with ecumenical partners.

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The only paid chaplain in a large acute hospital NHS 25 approx volunteer chaplains. Cof E female

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Chaplain for 5 years.

Leader of chaplaincy team of 14 volunteers who represent 6 denominations:

Anglican, RC, Salvation Army, Quaker, Independent Christian fellowship. Plus an Interfaith Minister.

We have 7 representatives of other world religions and Christian traditions who are available on call.

Spiritual and Religious Care provided for patients, families, staff and volunteers in a hospice.

3 units: Day Hospice (max 15 patients) Adult Unit (12 patients) Children's Unit (5 patients) I also set up Health and Wellbeing days for staff (x3 a year) and hold inter faith meditation sessions weekly. Also hold 4 Light Up a Life services annually to support the bereaved in the County at Christmas time. Also offer training for staff and volunteers about spiritual care in a palliative context. Also offer training for clergy around spiritual support for the dying. Also facilitated workshop on Burn Out.....plus the Therapeutic Benefits of religious Rituals in a Hospice.

My support comes from external monthly clinical supervision paid for by the hospice. I am a member of a Church of Scotland Presbytery that meets monthly in Gretna but cannot attend due to child care commitments. Therefore on a 'church' level, support is low and almost non-existent.

I attend an Anglican church and Quakers when I can but work 2 Sundays a month.

I have been ordained minister in Church of Scotland for 20 years.

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Flying Instructor, Commercial Pilot, Baptised and brought up as Anglican from birth, though not born again till 2007. Female.

Area Coordinator of Carlisle Street Pastors - each person in the group goes out once a month from 10pm to 3am on a Saturday night with the remit of 'Listening, Caring and Helping' in the night time economy of the city. SPs is an international organisation but operates mainly in the UK

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Senior Street Pastor for 6 yrs and also a Chaplain at CIC for 5 yrs. I am C of E and have been for 10 yrs after a break of 40 yrs - formerly a non-conformist. My ministry in the contexts above is to support those I see in hospital, including prayer and on the streets of Carlisle.

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Working with the farming community through Auction Marts.

I am a female, Methodist minister in her early thirties. This is my second stationing in a rural setting because I feel called to ministry with those on the margins.

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Emergency-services Co-ordinating Chaplain Cumbria. In my normal ministry I serve 4 churches Bewcastle, Brampton, Carlisle and Penrith for the URC. I am also ecumenical URC officer for Cumbria.

I am a voluntary chaplain in the hospital one day a week, and attend chaplaincy team meetings once a month; I also am on the Cumbria Care Chaplains who meet a few times each year to discuss the Morecambe Bay Hospitals. I have carried out this work for 16 years now. As an NSM priest I take Sunday services do pastoral visiting, I am the Chair of the Western Dales Mission Community and on their Steering Group. My faith tradition is C of E.

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**2. Please identify any doctrinal differences between your own denomination and that of the other three partners which, in your view, may be easily overcome for the sake of unity?**

None. I don't have much idea of Doctrine of non-conformist denominations as expressed in their worship and practice in the local area

-----  
I think that many 'doctrinal differences' have already been worked through to date. I think we have an understanding of how non episcopally ordered churches can work closely with episcopal ones. I think it will be interesting to see how work already done about communion and baptism can embrace the Salvation Army's perspective. As far as am aware TSA is not anti the sacraments - just chooses not to celebrate them. I have known many SA officers who are willing and sometimes keen to receive communion. It may make it difficult for SA officer to minister to a local church of the other traditions if they are not in a position to preside.

-----  
I am not aware of any!

-----  
I come from a more 'catholic' denomination than the other denominations. The residents where I work, who come from a variety of different backgrounds, appreciate the meditations I have led and the reflections on different seasons in the church year. Some of them are from Methodist or Free Church backgrounds but have enjoyed these reflections. Within the MHA Home, denominational differences don't really matter much and people from different traditions worship together and find a unity together.

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I am now licensed to the Western Dales mission Community and work with colleagues in the URC and the Methodist, alongside these I work also with Quakers and RC.

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Doctrinal differences, between the members of the team providing the ministry, within the healthcare setting, must be able to be laid aside, in order to focus on the need of the person being cared for. Team members have to be agreeable to ministering in a none judgemental environment, where others values and beliefs are accepted, even if they disagree with them.

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I don't go their doctrine is man made  
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Women have been ordained to Word and Sacrament in C of S since 1968.

Communion - not weekly in C of S. Mainly 4 times a year. But more frequent is no problem.

-----  
Street Pastors doesn't recognise denominations, because we aren't an evangelising organisation. We are the hands and feet of Jesus on the streets and our parent body doesn't allow us to preach the gospel, though we can answer questions. However, answers wouldn't reflect any particular denomination  
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Mission Communities not decided.

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In terms of Auction Mart Chaplaincy a willingness to work together is essential.  
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We get tied up in knots over the sacraments when we need not and gradually closer understanding is building up.

The greatest challenge I suppose is that I am in a non-episcopal Church but gradually the differences are blurring.

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We meet for joint services on special occasions and share services once a month. Meeting together for non-Eucharistic Services is no problem, meeting as friendly groups is always welcome.  
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**3. Please identify any doctrinal differences between your own denomination and that of the other three partners which, in your view, may be a challenge to overcome for the sake of unity?**

Predestination and election  
None acceptance of Apostolic succession  
Judicial substitutional theory of the atonement.  
Rejection of real presence in the Eucharist  
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I think it is no secret that the URC general assembly's decision to give local churches the right (but not the obligation) to host same sex marriages raises tricky questions. This would clearly be exacerbated if one of the URC congregations within the County were to choose to pursue this.  
-----

I am not aware of any here, either!  
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I am not aware of any doctrinal differences between the denominations which affect my work as Chaplain.

-----

Working with other denominations is always a challenge in some way but somehow we are able to get together and work services through. The congregations don't always like the way things are developing especially older people - and we all have a great number of older people in our congregations - and are glad to have them too.

-----

As a woman priest I would not ask to lead a catholic congregation for their sake

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Queen not head of our denomination. We are self-governing.

Priesthood of all believers - no Bishops in C of S. All ministers are equal. We have ordained elders who are seen to be equal theologically to ministers of word and sacrament.

Different views re same sex civil partnerships and weddings - including clergy. Diff church law on this.

Communion - we do not go forward to altar - we do not have an altar only a communion table which is much less venerated.

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Probably the only one in Carlisle generally would be the role of women in leadership. My church supports it.

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Sections of the clergy who do not recognise the role of women in church ministry.

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We struggle in the URC to see the Queen as the head of the Church unlike our Anglican friends and to recognise the power of Bishops.

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The C of E has Legal Rites which the other denominations do not have, such as being the legal representative during the marriage service.

We also understand the Sacraments differently - something which is very important to consider.

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#### **4. How might Mission Communities enhance your role as a chaplain?**

Perhaps a quaint with potential recruits as chaplains.

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I think it might enable the expansion of the team either by recruiting from within the mission community where the college is physically situated or by seeking to recruit people from all the



mission communities where the students and staff at the hospital live.

It also potentially eases the task of identifying staff and students with existing church connections. Not that this is all that chaplaincy is about, but sometimes it helps to have a way in.

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It may bring a closer relationship to Christians of other denominations but we already know each other well as we are in a small town and I work alongside Christians of varying backgrounds.

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I don't see much link to Mission Communities in my work, though I am an Anglican working in a Methodist Home so there is a mix of traditions there! When the Mission Community in Penrith develops further it may be that the Home would build up more links with other denominations as well as the local Methodist church. It does already have some link with the local Anglican church, but none with URC or Salvation Army. It would be good, as Chaplain, to build up links with other traditions and I think the residents would appreciate that.

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I have always accepted people with or without any faith therefore Mission Communities makes no difference. When taking a Hospital Holy Communion I have had RC's, URC's, Methodists and other faiths who have welcomed the service and have taken a full part.

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As the drive in Healthcare is towards more care being delivered in the community then the development of Mission communities may affect communication between chaplain and community groupings.

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I honestly have no idea

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I believe that the chaplaincy team here is already an ecumenical mission community. What would be helpful would be to have this recognised and supported and to be acknowledged as such. The Bishop is a patron but there is very little communication or contact or support. Yet he speaks on 'Dying Well' and has a senior role on Health. I believe this might have been different if the chaplain here were Anglican and part of the Diocese networks. I have never been invited to Chapter or Deanery Synod etc. I was included in County Chaplaincy Collaborative but it is dominated by Hospital chaplains and Anglicans.

I suggested that the chaplains in Carlisle (Trinity School, Hospital and Carlton Clinic) get together to support and encourage each other but no response or enthusiasm to do so.

Equally - despite my gifts in training and facilitating - still never asked to do anything in the Diocese for the Diocese. But I'm sure I would be if I were Anglican. A previous Anglican who was

chaplain here was involved in training ordinands at LTP. I sense people are busy and working largely solo. A great pity.

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As we are already a cross- denominational organisation there would be no benefit or disadvantage from this.

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No difference as we are independent and cross-denominational

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Working together more will be helpful.

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A great help in understanding other denominations and in relating to folk from all denominations

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As Chaplain in a hospital I visit all patients whether they have any religion or non, the Mission Community makes no difference to my role.

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## **5. How might Mission Communities impede your role as a chaplain?**

Use up valuable Chaplaincy time in nugatory discussions about irrelevant matters.

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The only way it might impede it would be that the increasing partnership between four traditions were to become an exclusive club. but I don't think that that will happen.

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do not anticipate a problem here unless it generates admin that adds nothing or little.

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I don't really feel Mission Communities having a negative impact on my role - they don't really have any 'official' influence at all! But in a sense I am already working ecumenically, as I am an Anglican priest working in a Methodist Home and the residents are welcoming of different traditions (see above)

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This will make no difference at all.

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Can only help to foster unity and communication and collaborative working in parish context which may in time benefit the people who need their services and pastoral care. Team working has massive added value.

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However, I fear that as a minority I may be left behind or excluded from the movement.

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As above. I think they can only enhance it, given that we are cross- denominational.

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Creating mission communities creates more meetings initially. This will stretch ministerial resources.

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I cannot see that they do cause any impediment  
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This does not happen.  
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**6. What, if any, does your host organisation (employer) understand by the term 'mission?'**

The mission of the church is Chaplaincy.  
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Probably in the contemporary business sense of 'mission statement' etc.  
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My Head would have a pretty good understanding of this I think. The idea of evangelism would be there, but also the wider understanding or participating in the mission of God. The wider organisation would vary hugely in understanding and many would not have a clear appreciation of what is meant by 'mission'.  
-----

'Mission' for MHA is about showing God's love in practical terms, being a presence with them, and naming God's presence when appropriate. Chaplains are called to live out their faith in Christ by showing pastoral and spiritual care, and giving out of their time and their very selves. This is what I see as my mission in my work as Chaplain.  
-----

As Chaplains we do not proselytise, we visit as the presence of Christ, we carry Him within us and patients and staff know us for being Christian. I don't think they see Chaplains as doing Mission!  
-----

'Mission' would be viewed in the organisation, if at all, in the secular usage as in 'mission statement'  
The ministry of Chaplains, within the organisation, is pastoral and specifically not overtly missional.  
-----

Frightened by it equate with evangelism and bible bashing  
-----

We have a mission statement even as a secular organisation.  
'We will have a well led team, with a shared vision, who are passionate, supportive, appreciative and non-judgemental which enables good communication to provide excellent care and effective team work'.  
-----

In terms of Christian mission we are not allowed to impart religious beliefs or faith share unless a patient, relative, staff or volunteer initiates the conversation. This is backed up by the code of conduct for Association of Hospice and Palliative Care

Chaplains. We are not in chaplaincy to make disciples. We are here to identify spiritual and religious needs and respond in a needs led way for each individual.

As chaplains our mission is to listen, to show compassion, to represent the unconditional love of God for All, to journey with all if, as, when and however we are needed.

-----  
Ascension Trust is our umbrella organisation and I'd guess that they see our role as the hand and feet of Jesus on the streets as being mission in its widest sense.

-----  
For SP it is 'listening, caring and helping'. As for the hospital, I don't know

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Reaching out to the wider community rather than simply staying within the established Church congregation.

-----  
The Hospital does not see mission, they see Spiritual Care as treating the whole person.  
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## **7. Would you like to make any other observations or comments about the introduction of ecumenical Mission Communities?**

They aren't really ecumenical. They are convenient forms of social affinity of the like-minded. Methodists in U.K. Reject episcopacy. As do URC - Sal Army reject sacraments. Also, the acceptance of same sex marriage by URC will be tricky for C of E evangelicals to avoid.

They aren't ecumenical, they aren't mission and aren't communities. ????

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I think they are positive way forward.

-----  
I welcome it but am concerned that it does not simply add another layer of admin on my clerical colleagues!

-----  
Ecumenical Mission Communities are what Christ prayed for. The closer we are able to work together the nearer we get to Christ's love for one another.

-----  
I think it is a good idea for me God is unity and love and divisions are cultural and man made  
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In terms of 'roles' and 'jobs' it would seem that most of these new posts are still going to Anglicans.

It's sad not to be involved or invited to be part of the process or development of ecumenical mission communities when so clearly we are pioneering this here in our chaplaincy team.

They can only be a good thing, as long as all denominations are prepared to be flexible and to accept differences. Without unity the church will die. We can no longer look inwards.

The only worry is that many congregations will need convincing that MCs are the way ahead.



Although there are still hurdles to climb I can only see this work as beneficial especially in terms of reaching folk outside the churches.

I can see that there are obstacles to be overcome. But do we need to be all the same? If so it will never work. We need to celebrate and understand each other's differences and share our faith with each other. We all believe in the Trinity - this to me is enough to work together.



### 3.4 Enquiry Three – Supplementary Engagement Consultation

At the research-design stage, many of the responses were not predicted. This therefore led to the question of whether or not chaplains were adequately consulted prior to the implementation of Mission Communities. Consequently, the following supplementary questions were asked of all chaplains via SmartSurvey™. At the time of the supplementary enquiry, the number of chaplains within scope had fallen to 58, of which 14 chose to respond, representing 24% of the total. Responses have not been corrected or amended.

1. Specifically in your role as a chaplain, to what degree do you feel that you were encouraged to participate in the consultation process prior to the introduction of 'Mission Communities?'

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Greatly encouraged		21.43%	3
2	Encouraged		14.29%	2

1. Specifically in your role as a chaplain, to what degree do you feel that you were encouraged to participate in the consultation process prior to the introduction of 'Mission Communities?'

			Response Per cent	Response Total
3	Neither encouraged nor discouraged		50.00%	7
4	Discouraged		0.00%	0
5	Greatly discouraged		0.00%	0
6	Not applicable		14.29%	2

2. Did you take the opportunity to engage with the consultation process?

			Response Per cent	Response Total
1	Yes		35.71%	5
2	No		64.29%	9

3. If the answer to Question 2 was 'No' would you like to say why you did not engage, including if it was not applicable to you at the time?

		Response Per cent	Response Total
		100.00%	9
1	I received no information directly, nor any notification of any consultative procedures or processes.		
2	I work in a Chaplaincy role in Penrith and have little to do with the other churches and Mission Community there.  I am involved in my Mission Community in Keswick but that is not in a Chaplaincy role.		
3	Not applicable to me.		
4	Because I don't feel the approach is relevant to my Chaplaincy Ministry		
5	Was never invited/told when such consultation was happening...thought it was only for certain people to engage in Chaplain role not really connected with the concept of Mission Communities		
6	It was firmly aimed at 'vicars' and Ministers - it wasn't clear it had any contact with 'Chaplains' work.		
7	It didn't feel an important enough process to contribute time to.		
8	I wasn't asked in any of my roles as a chaplain about the Mission Community process but I am fully involved in two mission communities as the local minister. It would be difficult to say which mission community a chaplain at the West Cumberland Hospital should be involved with - although physically placed in the East Whitehaven Mission Community it doesn't just serve that Mission Community, serving a much wider area encompassing at least five Mission Communities.		

3. If the answer to Question 2 was 'No' would you like to say why you did not engage, including if it was not applicable to you at the time?		
		Response Per cent
9	Not yet in the Diocese in consultation process. Greatly encouraged pre-interview to become engaged and aware of the importance of Mission Communities.	Response Total

4. Would you like to make any comment about the process of consultation prior to Mission Communities (as it applies to chaplains)?		
		Response Per cent
		Response Total
		100.00%
		12
1	n/a	
2	Any process of consultation would be most welcome. I suspect that chaplaincy, in a variety of areas, could strengthen the development of Mission Communities.	
3	I have never been approached by anyone in the Penrith Mission Community about my role and work. This seems a shame as my work embraces people from many different denominations and could be seen very positively as part of an ecumenical Mission Community	
4	I was only asked because of the thoughtfulness of one woman who was not clergy. I do not think I would have been involved if it had been up to clergy- who in my group seem very narrow in how they think they can/will engage with none churched- something chaplains have a great deal of experience in. Clergy seem to think it is just doing the same thing but bigger in groups.	
5	My experience of being a Chaplain is that I am on the edge of the Church. My opinion is not sought and I am not invited to be part of the general discussion. When I do meet with these kinds of conversations they are always about parish and therefore, as my professional role is not in a parish, there is a limit on what my contribution can be.	
6	Not sure how relevant the concept of Mission Communities is to the role of chaplain.in my context....	
7	I've been along to a clergy day, although my name wasn't on the register, and found it interesting, demonstrating perhaps there is something to be considered and developed, but it is early days and my time is taken up helping in a major restructuring on our community hospitals where several are having their beds removed helping to design a new role for health care in rural areas, even if it isn't clear what a chaplain's role will be - very interesting, so have enough on my plate!	
8	no	
9	There doesn't appear to have been any process of consultation with chaplains specifically in their chaplaincy role but in all my roles as a chaplain they are part of the community, but see answer at 3 above as chaplaincy roles often cover several Mission Communities	
10	No	
11	No	
12	N/A	

Analysis of these responses show that my suspicion that chaplains have not been adequately consulted is mistaken: no chaplains return that they were discouraged in any way from engaging. Therefore, the conclusion is drawn that the consultation process was adequate. Further interpretation is found below in Chapter 5 (Mission).

### *3.5 Analysis of Snapshot of Included Chaplains*

Cumbria Intelligence Observatory collates information from the most recent census (2011) using information from the Office of National Statistics. It employs them to plan and allocate resources for the county, as well as informing decisions about the allocation of local authority funding. Statistics relevant to this study have all been sourced from Cumbria Intelligence Observatory.

In order to understand and analyse the results obtained from the demographic survey conducted amongst chaplains, one has to compare and contrast the findings with the surrounding demographic landscape of Cumbria, as well as seeing them through the lens of national statistics. This is significant because, without the comparison, one might be left wondering why there is such a lack of general diversity amongst chaplains in Cumbria. Whilst this is indeed the case, it reflects the census figures, which illustrate that the County of Cumbria as a whole is not as diverse as most of the rest of the UK. Details of the data, along with some analysis, can be found in Appendix 3.



## 4. CHAPLAINS – REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES

This chapter is the bridge between the quantitative and qualitative chapters. Its purpose is to display to readers the relationship between chaplains and service users. It does this by illustrating four representative examples. It asks ‘to whom are chaplaincy facilities being offered (service users), and by whom (chaplains)?’

The chapter begins by engaging with the issue of impact and establishing working definitions relevant to this study. It asks who impact is upon, and then selects four chaplaincy models in order to acknowledge a cross-section of service users (without eliciting information from them, for the methodological/ethical considerations explained in 1.8). Overall responses from chaplains suggest that there are a number of distinctive characteristics which separate chaplains from other clergy/lay ministers. These distinctives are observed from the perspective of how they might contribute to the five areas of disconnect that have arisen. Finally, the chapter identifies who in-scope chaplains are, how they are trained, who they are accountable to, how their work is measured and how they might engage in healthy partnerships with their host organisations. It begins though, with the noun at the centre of the research question: impact.

### *4.1 Impact*

Chapter 4 in its entirety is driven by Ryan’s assertion that until there is a proper appreciation of what chaplaincy is for, any question of impact risks looking at the wrong issue. It seeks to engage directly with a research

question thread that asks, 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models throughout the County?'<sup>71</sup> Effect, or impact, is at the centre of the study and therefore it is relevant to ask:

- a) On whom is the impact being assessed?
- b) Who is affecting the impact?
- c) How is the impact measured?

For the purpose of this research I have chosen to define impact (in the context of the difference made by the introduction of ecumenical Mission Communities) as that which:

- a) Results in a chaplain changing their working practice with either colleagues or service users.
- b) Causes a chaplain to rethink their theological position in any way.
- c) Apparently affects the relationship between the chaplain and the people or organisations that they serve.

By way of distinction, the consequences of chaplains' ministry on service users is articulated as 'effect', in order to make clear the difference between that, and the above definition of impact when referring to chaplains.

## *4.2 To Whom?*

In Cumbria the range of service users is wide. It spans across those who self-refer (such as when a hospital patient specifically asks to see a chaplain) to those who come into the scope of those chaplains exercising a ministry of presence (such as Street Pastors). Acknowledging that some service users

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<sup>71</sup> Ryan, *A Very Modern Ministry*, 31.

will fall into the category of 'vulnerable persons', an ethical decision was taken not to interview, question or engage in any way with recipients of chaplaincy services. Therefore, the effect upon service users has been drawn only from chaplains themselves, or other peripheral observers - such as Prison Service managers. As previously discussed, this is because a methodological choice has been taken to focus on service providers (rather than service users) and the impact that the introduction of ecumenical Mission Communities may have on them.<sup>72</sup> There follows four representative examples of service users in a cross-section of chaplaincy fields.

#### 4.2.1 Chaplaincy in the Prison Environment

Prison chaplains find that they affect prisoners in many ways – and that prisoners engage for all kinds of reasons. From my own experience as a Managing Chaplain in the Prison Service I have elsewhere offered my opinion that chaplaincy service users in a prison environment are seekers, converts, opportunists, returners, engineers and the devout. The full explanation underlying these terms is published in a popular (rather than academic) Christian newspaper.<sup>73</sup> Whilst much of what the article contains is clearly fictional and anecdotal, it does represent the range of service users in a custodial/institutional setting. Yet, many UK prisons are 'villages within walls', and thus a reflection of society outside. Churches in the community

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<sup>72</sup> For a fuller explanation of this methodological choice, see 1.8 Ethical Considerations.

<sup>73</sup> Glynn Jones, "Prisons: From Despair to Hope", *Evangelicals Now* (October 2017), retrieved from [www.e-n.org.uk/2016/10/features/prisons-from-despair-to-hope/](http://www.e-n.org.uk/2016/10/features/prisons-from-despair-to-hope/)

will also have their share of seekers, converts, opportunists, returners, engineers and the devout. What this article misses out is that prison chaplains are also there to support prison staff during their times of joy and trial, such as conducting weddings and funerals – as well as being an integral part of the prison support structure during times of operational stress. Another organisation that also supports its staff, but does not necessarily have the same type of service user as prisons, is healthcare.

#### 4.2.2 Chaplaincy in the Healthcare Environment

The religiously affiliated who are confined to hospital for any period of time may want to see their own religious representative, or a chaplain from their own denomination. Many, however, are of no faith background and may simply wish to engage with another person with whom they have something in common. Jim Al-Khalili, former president of the British Humanist Society, theoretical physicist and respected broadcaster observes:

Prisons, hospitals and hospices recognize the importance of holistic care, including meeting peoples' pastoral and 'spiritual' needs. This provision needs to be appropriate to that person's religion or belief. For example, a Hindu may wish to speak to someone who believes that they may return to this life, a Christian to someone who believes they may go to heaven and a non-religious person to someone who believes this is the one life we have. Good pastoral support often depends upon establishing a rapport with a like-minded person.<sup>74</sup>

Whilst Al-Khalili's comment is relevant, it does come from the perspective of an adversarial position – suggesting that pastoral support for patients is either religious or secular. In contrast to this, a Sikh chaplain articulated to

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<sup>74</sup> Jim Al-Khalili, "Humanist Pastoral Support – British Humanist Association", [cited 22 April 2017]. Online: <https://humanism.org.uk/community/humanist-pastoral-support/>

me their experience as an in-patient. They were confined to a hospital where they knew that there was no Sikh on the chaplaincy team. However, this person was under the impression that a chaplain from another denomination would visit them on their 'rounds'. They were disappointed to discover that, in the hospital where they were located at the time, one had specifically to request to see a chaplain, as there were no formal 'rounds' where a duty chaplain would pastorally call in to all areas of the hospital. The Sikh patient simply wanted to engage with another human being whilst they were in a low place; it did not, they claimed, need to be an ordained person, or a person of any particular faith. A volunteer with the chaplaincy team (from any religion or none) would have sufficed.<sup>75</sup>

Ten hospitals<sup>76</sup> and four hospice organisations<sup>77</sup> represent Cumbrian chaplains who have responded to this study. Gathering together all the responses pertinent to whom they have impact upon, they generally concur with the patient needs identified by the Mayo Clinic Proceeding Journal,

To listen to me.  
To remind me of God's care and presence.  
To be with me at times of anxiety or uncertainty.  
To counsel me regarding moral/ethical concerns or decisions.  
To pray and/or read scripture or sacred texts with me.  
For a religious ritual or sacrament.  
To offer support to my family or friends.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> A personal conversation with respondent 01@i83, 12 December 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Alston Cottage Hospital, Carleton Clinic, Cumbria Infirmary, Furness General Hospital, Mary Hewetson Cottage Hospital, Maryport Victoria Cottage Hospital, Penrith Hospital, West Cumbria Hospital, Westmorland General Hospital and Workington Community Hospital.

<sup>77</sup> Eden Valley Hospice with 'Jigsaw,' formerly Eden House Children's Hospice, St Mary's Hospice, Ulverston and West Cumbria Hospice at Home.

<sup>78</sup> Karen Piderman et al., "Predicting Patients' Expectations of Hospital Chaplains: A Multisite Survey", *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* 85 November (2010): 1002-1010. Online: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2966363/table/T5/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2966363/table/T5/)

Many of the categories pertinent to healthcare chaplaincy are also relevant for those exercising a chaplaincy ministry to the emergency services.

#### 4.2.3 Chaplaincy in the Emergency Services Environment

In Cumbria, the emergency services within the scope of this study are police and fire and rescue. They are organised and administered by the Emergency-Services Chaplaincy Co-ordinator and, to some degree, the Emergency Response Team Co-ordinator. Chaplains in this area of ministry speak of being involved mainly with those personnel on front-line duties. In the aftermath of the Cumbrian shootings in West Cumbria,<sup>79</sup> one chaplain related their experience of befriending a particular police officer over a number of years during times of both trials and sorrows. The chaplain articulated that, 'People need hope in the best of times, but how do we respond in the worst of times, like these?'<sup>80</sup> They spoke of simply being expected to stand alongside those suffering the trauma of their work experience. Since this study has specifically taken an ethical decision not to engage with service users, the effect upon them in this area is anecdotal and collected from third parties. A police chaplain related this comment from a service user, 'This job is hard enough as it is. A copper can't do right for doing wrong. I need all the spiritual help I can get'.<sup>81</sup> Another (anonymous) service-

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<sup>79</sup> On 2 June 2010 Derrick Bird, a lone gunman with no apparent motive, shot and killed twelve people, and injured eleven others in West Cumbria before killing himself.

<sup>80</sup> Personal conversation with respondent A1@b33, 13 December 2016.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with respondent U1@e38, 11 May 2016.

user comment is quoted on the Cumbria Police Chaplains' website, 'A listening ear helped me see my way through'.<sup>82</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Chaplaincy in the Night/Street Economy

Within the scope of this study, the night-time economy of Cumbria is served specifically in Carlisle. Young people at leisure on the streets are cared for and watched over by the emergency services, who welcome the support of Street Pastors by including them in briefing and planning meetings, as well as furnishing them with police radios. Attention was also drawn by a Street Pastor<sup>83</sup> to a public expression of support, made by Police Inspector Di Bradbury of the City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team in June 2010:

I absolutely embraced the chance to work with the Pastors and welcomed them onto Botchergate for the first time and have witnessed their patrols many times during the first eight months. They have all gone through a standardised and professional training programme and with their recognisable uniform have become a reassuring presence in the city on a Saturday night. The Pastors' remit was always to act as caring eyes and ears, performing acts of kindness, looking after peoples' welfare, especially during the early hours when alcohol can leave people especially vulnerable. However, their role has extended far beyond that. Police patrols can now contact the Pastors to assist the vulnerable and the Pastors themselves are alert to safety issues and have removed 460 bottles and 121 glasses, sometimes as many as 64 in one evening, from potentially dangerous locations within the city centre. This has undoubtedly prevented these being used as weapons or causing accidental injury. The presence of the Street Pastors is always very well received by people on Saturday night, and they have brought with them a visibly calming influence.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Cumbria Police Chaplains. [cited 25 April 2017]. Online: [www.police-chaplains.org.uk/nacp3/documents/Cumbria-contacts.pdf](http://www.police-chaplains.org.uk/nacp3/documents/Cumbria-contacts.pdf)

<sup>83</sup> Interview with respondent A2\*g26, 17 December 2016.

<sup>84</sup> Di Bradbury, "Carlisle Street Pastors", [cited 25 April 2017]. Online: [www.carlislestreetpastors.org.uk/](http://www.carlislestreetpastors.org.uk/)

A comment such as this, from a senior police officer, serves not only to cement the relationship between chaplains and the professional emergency-service providers, but also to highlight the effect that the Street Pastors and police have on each other.

#### 4.2.5 Chaplaincy Distinctives

This subheading acknowledges that there are a number of distinctive characteristics between chaplains and clergy/lay ministers. These include a certain defensiveness on the part of chaplains due to, a) demands to justify their existence, b) anxiety to prove their worth by elevating their status and c) pressure to justify their calling.

The demand to justify their existence may be the reason why there are no noticeable comments from chaplains which include any element of objective negativity. No respondent or commentator has observed that there have been any failings in the chaplaincy service that they provide. None have indicated that there has ever been a complaint about the service. Indeed, it would appear from all the interviews conducted and surveys carried out that chaplains have elevated themselves and their ministry, with no recognition at all of any flaws. One possible reason for this is that chaplains are on the defensive due to the constant pressure to justify their existence by what they actually do – particularly those who receive funding from the public purse. This presents a problem: to what degree can chaplains accurately and realistically measure their worth? It may be easy to keep figures showing how many individuals have been seen; but it is more difficult to assess the impact, say, of a prison chaplain who has spent one single hour persuading a



prisoner not to vent his anger by climbing onto a roof and mounting a protest. Is this measured only by the single hour of contact time, or is the multiple specialist staff and resource hours that would have been needed had the chaplain not been successful included in the equation? This pressure of accountability, solely through statistics, may be one reason why chaplains do not articulate any negative aspects of their ministry. It is not the only reason, though. There is a suggestion that those opting for a ministry in chaplaincy cannot do anything else. Perhaps this is the reason why some chaplains are anxious to prove their worth. Some chaplains (both lay and ordained) may be tempted to go about that by elevating their status.

Arguably, status may be advanced by obtaining additional professional qualifications, such as counselling. Status may also be lifted up by the title that one holds. One non-chaplain observer said, 'I know that I'm going to dig myself into a hole here, but in my experience, chaplains are people who can't hack being a parish priest. They are just not up to it, so they take the easy option. There, I've said it now'.<sup>85</sup> Whilst this comment suggests that a chaplain is of lower rank than a parish priest, a more tangible example comes from a sphere of chaplaincy where the Project Manager was under discussion. The Chair of the Project Management Committee acknowledges that the individual is employed in a dual role, half-time in the parish and half-time chaplain. The difficulty, the Chair says, is that the person in question, 'whilst a very good chaplain, is somewhat of a liability in a parish context'.<sup>86</sup> In this particular set of circumstances, the Project Manager had unilaterally

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<sup>85</sup> Personal conversation with respondent A1\*i79, 28 March 2017.

<sup>86</sup> Personal conversation with respondent M1@i75, 25 April 2017.

badged himself as 'Team Leader', much to the annoyance of the Project Management Committee and other chaplains exercising a ministry in that area. This raises another reason why chaplains might elevate their status: a desire to professionalise themselves.

Stephen Evans, in his National Secular Society opinion column, understands this self-elevation to be 'The Booming Industry of Religious Chaplaincy'.<sup>87</sup> His argument is that, since chaplaincy is so ill-defined, anyone can readily label themselves as a religious chaplain. This is not entirely accurate, because those from mainstream denominations are usually subject to some form of process before being appointed. After appointment though, those chaplains who have been placed in a position of management may well decide to take on volunteers or sessionally paid chaplains through a selection procedure of their own making. Those recruited in this way are not necessarily subject to formal denominational authority and structures. It is this that lends legitimate weight to Evans' belief that religious chaplaincy is a booming, almost out-of-control, industry. Evidence for this from outside of Cumbria is seen in the web page 'blog' of Jody Kushins, entitled, 'I'm not really a chaplain: I just play one to pay the bills'.<sup>88</sup> In it she describes her transition from unemployed university lecturer, to Jewish chaplain. She confesses to having no faith qualifications, other than that of being a cultural Jew. Whilst she is transparent as to her motives for seeking a chaplaincy

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<sup>87</sup> Stephen Evans, "The Booming Industry of Religious Chaplaincy". 2012, [cited 28 April 2017]. Online: [www.secularism.org.uk/blog/2012/03/the-booming-industry-of-religious-chaplaincy](http://www.secularism.org.uk/blog/2012/03/the-booming-industry-of-religious-chaplaincy)

<sup>88</sup> Jody Kushins, "I'm Not Really a Chaplain: I Just Play One to Pay the Bills", 2010, [cited 2 May 2017]. Online: <http://harlotofthearts.org/index.php/harlot/article/view/50/44>

position (to pay the bills), perhaps her action can be defended on the grounds that she has adapted her transferable skills as a university lecturer, and combined them with her faith background in order to fit a perceived Jewish chaplaincy need in a Christian college. One might argue that the position she has engineered for herself holds integrity, at the same time acknowledging the National Secular Society view that she has simply re-invented herself and capitalised on the perceived need of a faith representative.

The need to professionalise ministry is most often seen in non-ordained chaplains. For example, one respondent expressed concern at the status given to ordained clergy. They said that non-ordained people working in pastoral set-ups outside the Church were undermined if they were not labelled as 'chaplains' (which allowed them to give the impression that they were ordained, even though they were not).<sup>89</sup> Ordained or lay, there is also a positive aspect to the statement that some take up chaplaincy simply because they cannot fulfil a parish role. This is to do with 'calling'.

Almost all respondents, through questionnaire and interview, speak of being 'called' to chaplaincy ministry. There may be some exceptions, such as Jody Kushins, outside Cumbria, but none involved in this study have expressed any other motivation than being called to a specific chaplaincy ministry. It might legitimately be argued that, in discerning one's ministry gifts, it is necessary for each individual Christian to identify which of them will build the Church. J.I. Packer argues that,

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<sup>89</sup> Written reply from respondent M2@a51.

Three certainties about spiritual gifts stand out. First, a spiritual gift is an ability in some way to express, celebrate, display and so communicate Christ. We are told that gifts, rightly used, build up Christians and churches ... Second, gifts are of two types: There are gifts of speech and loving, practical helpfulness. No thought of one gift over another may enter in. However much gifts differ as forms of human activity, all are of equal dignity and the only question is whether one properly uses the gift one has. Third, no Christian is giftless and it is everyone's responsibility to find, develop and fully use whatever capacities for service God has given.<sup>90</sup>

Accepting Packer's assertion that each Christian has an obligation to identify their gift (or calling), and that one cannot be superior to another, then it is wholly legitimate for a chaplain to state that they simply cannot do anything else. This is not to suggest that they are incapable of carrying out, say, the duties of a parish minister; but more accurately that theirs is a complementary ministry. Those equipped with the gifts necessary to be a parish priest need those who are gifted to be chaplains: those equipped with the gifts necessary to be chaplains, equally need those who are gifted to be parish priests, if the Church is to be built up.

#### *4.3 By Whom?*

It has already been acknowledged that the term chaplaincy is not easy to define. Equally, there is no consensus of opinion or clarity in how one defines a chaplain. However, included for the purposes of this study are: ordained clergy from the partnership denominations; lay personnel from the partner denominations; and groups of 'nominated' personnel who work with a

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<sup>90</sup> J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, (Wheaton: Tyndale, 2001), 227-228.

pastoral remit, such as Street Pastors.<sup>91</sup> The same questions arise for all of these groups: Who trains them and how? Who authorises them? Who are they accountable to?

#### 4.3.1 Training

This subheading concerns itself with the training opportunities available to chaplains through each of the denominations. The question of provision, access and quality of training is pertinent to all chaplains. Denominational partners within Mission Communities offer limited chaplaincy training courses. The content of these will be examined further within this subheading.

First though, some specific training was offered to Mission Community leaders. One of the trainees responded that the training was both, 'good and frustrating'.<sup>92</sup> Specific training, the respondent observed, was having a huge impact on the development of the Mission Community. They explained this as,

Being the first commissioned Mission Community in Cumbria has proved to be both good and frustrating. Good in that as Mission Community Leader I have received excellent training and support from the Diocese to undertake this new role. However, my frustration is that there does not appear to have been any corresponding training for team vicars and others in the Mission Community. The result of this is that I am trying to be the Mission Community Leader as well as the Team Rector. This is because the support staff have not been trained to understand that the new Mission Community Leader is no longer the Rector. The job of the Mission Community Leader is to be an enabler, to enable laity and clergy to be the church in this place. The

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<sup>91</sup> As noted in 3.1 the full range of Cumbrian chaplaincy models included in the scope of this research are: Agricultural; Arts; Care Homes; Civic; Educational; Emergency Services; Health Care; Industrial; Mothers' Union; Prisons; Retail; Sports; Street Pastors/Urban; Youth Organisations.

<sup>92</sup> Respondent A1\*186.

problem of lack of training is seen in the way that some individuals and parishes remain pockets of resistance. Because this small nucleus still want things to remain as they always were in a distant era, they are holding things back. We are still making progress, but this is much slower than I would like it to be. Let me balance all that by saying that the Diocese has now recognised the importance of training, and that what has recently been offered by Cumbria Christian Learning<sup>93</sup> is excellent – but we still have some way to go in terms of training.<sup>94</sup>

The complaint that this respondent articulates is that, whilst training for Mission Community leaders has been good, there is a flaw in that no corresponding training has been on offer for others in the Mission Community. It may be that a more legitimate observation would be that communicating the new structure has been inadequate. Yet by March 2016, communication and training, in the form of regional roadshows, gave the whole county an opportunity to become fully informed and access further training.<sup>95</sup> The respondent feels that the people in their Mission Community have not understood the process and the new structure and, consequently, the respondent has been left to cope with two full-time jobs: Mission Community Leader and Rector. Whilst there may be an element of accuracy in this analysis, it does not sufficiently support the respondent's own observation that there are pockets of resistance from some individuals and parishes, which the respondent blames on lack of training. Rather than inadequacy of training or communication, it could be that there is a significant

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<sup>93</sup> Cumbria Christian Learning (CCL) is a training resource created to support Mission Community denominational partners. CCL co-ordinates and delivers vocational training packages, as well as Initial Ministerial Education and Continuing Professional Development.

<sup>94</sup> Respondent A1\*186.

<sup>95</sup> Prior to the introduction of the first Mission Community, open to partner denominations and all other interested parties, Cumbria completed a series of ten county-wide God for All roadshows, at which there was an opportunity to pose questions about Mission Communities, as well as being briefed about learning and training opportunities.

number of people who do not want to see change from a traditional parish model to a fresh expression in the form of a Mission Community. Whilst this cannot be evidenced in this project, it is a more likely reason than lack of communication and training for individuals to choose not to allow the new structure to affect them: they express their dissent by not taking on the roles of the Rector, so that the new Mission Community Leader is left with the impossible task of trying to do both; with the intended result being failure and subsequent reversion to the former system. In drawing attention to the flaws as they see them, respondent A1\*<sup>96</sup> might also have failed to take into account the similarity between their own Mission Community and the previously mentioned 'South Calder experiment' (Chapter 2). Both these areas are of around 200 square miles and are in remote locations in Cumbria. It may be that the enormity of the task of recruitment is more significant than lack of training and/or resistance by personnel living within the Mission Community area.

In terms of denominational training for chaplains, the Methodist Church has the most formal and structured understanding of chaplaincy. It traces its link back to the time of the Wesleys and asserts that its chaplaincy schemes are 'run by the local church, the Circuit, or the Connexion; but there is always some sense in which the chaplain is "sent" by the Church. [Methodist] chaplains always work with the support of the Church – they are never alone'.<sup>96</sup> This premise of chaplains being attached to the wider church is confirmed by four out of the six Methodist respondents to Enquiry One

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<sup>96</sup> Methodist Church, "What Is Chaplaincy"? [cited 4 May 2017]. Online: [www.methodist.org.uk/media/744405/chaplaincy-pack-general-1212.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/744405/chaplaincy-pack-general-1212.pdf)

(subheading 3.2). Further scrutiny reveals that Methodist chaplaincy is heavily weighted towards 'presence', evidenced by a comprehensive description of the chaplaincy role in the training package 'Chaplaincy Everywhere'.<sup>97</sup> Whilst Chaplaincy Everywhere is a small group resource for nurturing God's mission through chaplaincy, rather than being mandatory prior to commissioning, its seven-session course structure takes interested individuals through a clear process of planning a chaplaincy ministry, and then going on to actually deliver it. Small groups of between three and eight people begin with theology (exploring the Mission of God), and conclude with pragmatic details of putting learning and theory into working practice. The course contents conclude with a commissioning service for volunteer chaplains.<sup>98</sup>

Equally well-structured chaplaincy training is offered by the Salvation Army, who offer training at both introductory and advanced levels under the heading of 'Contemporary Chaplaincy'.<sup>99</sup> The Advanced Certificate in Chaplaincy runs in conjunction with Oasis College and is accredited by the University of Staffordshire. The Certificate is in two parts.<sup>100</sup> The Salvation Army also offer the option to build on this course in order to achieve the

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<sup>97</sup> Methodist Church, 'Chaplaincy Everywhere Discussion Starter', [cited 5 May 2017]. Online: [www.opensourcechaplaincy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Chaplaincy-Everywhere-Discussion-Starter.pdf](http://www.opensourcechaplaincy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Chaplaincy-Everywhere-Discussion-Starter.pdf)

<sup>98</sup> Methodist Church, Chaplaincy Everywhere. Contents: 1. Caught Up in the Mission of God. 2. As Christ in the World. 3. The Spirit of Chaplaincy. 4. The Cloak of Chaplaincy. 5. What Do Chaplains Do? Bringing It All Together. 6. Chaplaincy in Today's World; a Look at Our Context. 7. What? When? Where? Job Descriptions & Essentials.

<sup>99</sup> William Booth College, "Contemporary Chaplaincy (Introductory and Advanced)", [cited 21 May 2017]. Online: [www.sistad.org/courses/acc.html](http://www.sistad.org/courses/acc.html)

<sup>100</sup> Part 1: Three one-day workshops spread over four months. Part 2: Assessment by two written assignments both of which 'ask that you reflect on your current role as a chaplain'.



‘Territorial Certificate in Chaplaincy’.<sup>101</sup>

Formal training for chaplains in the Church of England is offered only to those involved in higher education chaplaincy. This is provided by the Churches’ Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG), under the heading of ‘New Chaplains and Chaplaincy Assistants’ Training Course’.<sup>102</sup>

The URC takes an arguably low view of chaplaincy training. This may be because throughout the UK there are only 35 URC chaplains caring for people in hospitals, schools, workplaces, prison and the armed forces.<sup>103</sup> Training in the URC, for both Ministry of Word and Sacrament (MWS) and Church Related Community Work (CRCW), includes no specific training for chaplains, save that all students complete three placements; the second of these is a ‘secular placement, such as a chaplaincy’.<sup>104</sup>

On the surface, the overall training of chaplains within the partner denominations appears to be very good indeed. However, the gathered data show that over a quarter of chaplains have received no specific training at all. This lends itself to the argument put forward by the National Secular Society, that chaplaincy is a booming industry because it is unregulated, and almost anyone can label themselves as a religious chaplain with little or no

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<sup>101</sup> William Booth College, Contemporary Chaplaincy: The Territorial Certificate in Chaplaincy is achieved by the completion of three reflexives of 350 words each, following attendance at relevant short courses of at least two days’ duration.

<sup>102</sup> Church of England, “New Chaplains Training”, [cited 21 May 2017]. Online: [www.churchofengland.org/education/colleges-universities/he/chaplaincy-resources/new-chaplains-training.aspx](http://www.churchofengland.org/education/colleges-universities/he/chaplaincy-resources/new-chaplains-training.aspx)

<sup>103</sup> United Reformed Church, “Peter Stevenson, Building Site Chaplain”, [cited 21 May 2017]. Online: [www.urc.org.uk/media-news/1995-peter-stevenson-building-site-chaplain.html](http://www.urc.org.uk/media-news/1995-peter-stevenson-building-site-chaplain.html)

<sup>104</sup> United Reformed Church, “Education for Ministry - Phase 1”, [cited 21 May 2017]. Online: [www.urc.org.uk/images/Discipleship/EducationLearning2015/Training-for-Ministry-Dec15web.pdf](http://www.urc.org.uk/images/Discipleship/EducationLearning2015/Training-for-Ministry-Dec15web.pdf)

training.<sup>105</sup> This plausible view is evidenced by the previously mentioned Jody Kushins and her social media publication, 'I'm Not Really a Chaplain: I Just Play One to Pay the Bills'.<sup>106</sup> However, the rhetoric behind the anti-religious chaplain lobby appears to suggest that all chaplains are untrained volunteers, whose real reason for being where they are is simply to proselytise. Whilst the figures do indeed show that many chaplains have received no specific chaplaincy training, the sweeping generalisation from the National Secular Society fails to acknowledge that in excess of 86% of chaplains are ordained, and will have therefore undergone a rigorous and extended period of assessed training prior to ordination. It cannot be accurately extrapolated from the returns, but even if only a small number (say, half) of lay chaplains have received specific training, then this skews the overall figure of chaplains who are trained to 93%. The argument then, that chaplains are untrained volunteers who promote themselves to enhance their status to professional level cannot be qualified from this evidence; this strongly indicates that the majority of chaplains are trained professionals, albeit acknowledging that not all training is specific to a particular chaplaincy context. A similar narrative employed against religious chaplains is the lack of accountability.

#### 4.3.2 Accountability

It can be legitimately argued that the majority of chaplains who responded to this study come under the umbrella of accountability to their denomination

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<sup>105</sup> Evans, *The Booming Industry*.

<sup>106</sup> Kushins, *I'm Not Really a Chaplain*.

and/or their host organisation. Since 86% are ordained and sit under a denominational order, and 60% exercise a ministry with a known line-management process (such as healthcare), it is a fair assumption that there is little space for 'mavericks' - those who wish to act independently and without being subject to proper authority, discipline and structure. On some occasions, though, there can be a clash of understanding between denomination and host organisation expectations. At a meeting between chaplains in Cumbria and senior diocesan leaders, one healthcare chaplain, in discussion about how Mission Communities are viewed by their host organisation (to whom they are equally accountable), stated that the word 'mission' conjured up pictures of proselytising, which the host organisation specifically forbids.<sup>107</sup> In response to this, a member of the Anglican bishop's senior staff team replied, 'Of course, we [as Anglicans] don't advertise ourselves as missionaries in such situations; but make no mistake, that's what you are'.<sup>108</sup> This highlights the tension between being co-accountable to more than one body, especially where there exists such a conflict of understanding. Identifying who chaplains are, who they impact upon, how they are trained and who they are accountable to is something that, to a degree, can be measured. The outcome, however, is more difficult to quantify.

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<sup>107</sup> Respondent A1\*d20 at meeting in Bishop's House (which I attended and witnessed) on 4 October 2016.

<sup>108</sup> Respondent A1@i74 at meeting in Bishop's House (which I attended and witnessed) on 4 October 2016.

#### 4.3.3 Measurement

Whilst this research seeks to measure the impact of the introduction of Mission Communities on chaplains, it may also be legitimate to ask why one needs to measure the efficiency of chaplaincy in general. The question is raised in this study because some chaplains may be encouraged by being able to demonstrate their work output in a secular model. Others might argue that adopting a business-like model of measurement actually detracts from the 'otherness' of employing a faith/spiritual dimension. This is more acutely noticed where the host organisations are large, public institutions whose primary business is to meet the goals set by government in the interest of public service. Contrast this with the underlying motivation of a Christian chaplain, especially given the previous example, where a senior clergyperson expressed the view to a chaplain in the public institution arena, 'Of course, we [as Anglicans] don't advertise ourselves as missionaries in such situations, but make no mistake, that's what you are'.<sup>109</sup> The chaplain is not appointed with the primary aim of meeting the agenda of the 'business', but often as a critical friend, or one who 'speaks truth to power'. The chaplain is 'a part of', but also 'apart from' the organisation. In developing the argument for radical ministry, and exhorting Christians not to try to adapt a professional business model for ministry, John Piper in 'Brothers, We Are Not Professionals' states,

We are fools for Christ's sake. But professionals are wise. We are weak. But professionals are strong. Professionals are held in high honour. We

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<sup>109</sup> Respondent A1@i74 at meeting in Bishop's House (which I attended and witnessed) on 4 October 2016.

are in disrepute. We do not try to secure a professional lifestyle, but we are ready to hunger and thirst and be ill-clad and homeless.<sup>110</sup>

If Piper is correct, then the chaplain ploughs a lone furrow, answerable and accountable only to God. This may well be acceptable where the chaplaincy is independently funded, with a narrow (or at least well-defined) understanding of mission. Even so, where the public purse is involved, one is bound to act within the boundaries set by the host organisation. More often than not, these boundaries and conditions include record-keeping and the monitoring of efficiency and value for money for the tax-payer. The Prison Service is a good example of chaplains being required to meet set standards. Every year the chaplaincy team in each prison in England and Wales (in both the public and the private sector) is subject to Assurance and Compliance testing. To reach an acceptable level, the result must be at least 92% compliance with the standards. Chaplaincy efficiency is measured under a set of output headings of the relevant Prison Service Instruction (PSI), all of which have a detailed protocol of interrogation attached to them.<sup>111</sup> Reading through these standards in detail provides an insight into some of the advantages of not heeding Piper's call to divorce ministry [and chaplaincy] entirely from some of the better practices found in both the public-sector and private business models.<sup>112</sup> So-called 'secular practice', in the representative

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<sup>110</sup> John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Earn: Christian Focus, 2008), 1.

<sup>111</sup> Ministry of Justice, "Faith and Pastoral Care for Prisoners. Prison Service Instruction (05/2016)", [cited 28 May 2017]. Online: [www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psis/prison-service-instructions-2016](http://www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psis/prison-service-instructions-2016)

The full range of expected outcomes from PSI 05/2016 can be seen in Appendix 8, 'PSI 05/2016 Outcomes.'

<sup>112</sup> Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*, 1-4. Piper presents the foundation for his hypothesis that the church should abandon secular practices.

example of the Prison Service, would appear to protect and enhance the religious and spiritual freedom that Piper seeks to detach completely from any other institutional practice. The outcomes detailed in Appendix 8 (quoted from PSIs) are very much a summary of the standards expected. To each outcome there is a set of indicators to gauge how well, or poorly, the chaplaincy is meeting the required standards – many of which are not only mandatory but statutory, as they are contained in the 1952 Prisons Act. Bringing together quality training, sound accountability and compliance with required outcomes lends itself to healthy partnerships with host organisations.

#### 4.3.4 Healthy Partnerships with Host Organisations

This subheading naturally follows on from the previous subjects of training, accountability and measurement. It brings into focus the complexity of working with competing ideologies and priorities, and suggests how the sensitive use of language may be an aid to bridging the gap and fostering healthy partnerships with host organisations.

When a chaplain demonstrates compliance with the required standards, they are entering into, and agreeing with, a partnership model. For this partnership to be successful, chaplains need to realise that, in large organisations, they are only one cog in the wheel. For the whole to be efficient, each part has to be fully co-ordinated. This is evidenced not only by cold compliance, but also by an understanding of those aspects that are not necessarily natural to a faith perspective. For instance, the 2010 Equalities Act is implicitly enshrined into the PSI. Some of the protected characteristics

of the Equalities Act might be viewed as mutually incompatible.<sup>113</sup> For example 'faith' is protected, as is 'sexual orientation'. Whilst this study does not concern itself with any particular interpretation of doctrine, it can be reasonably observed that the core beliefs of all major faith groups accepted by the Ministry of Justice view the practice of homosexuality as not part of God's ideal plan. This puts two protected characteristics on a potential collision course. Nonetheless, whilst the chaplain has a right to hold to the core beliefs of their denomination, they also have a responsibility not to express that belief in a way that misrepresents the position of the Ministry of Justice – or indeed contravenes the Equalities Act. The working out in practice of this one issue is an example of why chaplains cannot dissociate themselves from their host organisation, and this can be seen clearly in the PSI, which has been added in its entirety (Appendix 8) for this purpose. Another example from the PSI of how some parts of a secular business model are compatible with chaplaincy is the use of language and terminology.

When the chaplain is able to engage with the language and terminology of the organisation, they demonstrate an ability to move freely within the institution without fear of being misunderstood. For example, when the chaplain articulates their work in terms of mission, this risks misinterpretation by non-faith hearers who, quite possibly, might interpret mission as proselytising (strictly forbidden by the Ministry of Justice).

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<sup>113</sup> Protected characteristics specifically being: age; disability; gender re-assignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation.

However, for the chaplain to submit a Business Plan within a Service Level Agreement (terms extensively used in the PSI), then such a risk is minimised. Equally, the PSI, where necessary, uses faith specific terms for religious leaders: it extensively speaks of 'chaplains', rather than rabbis, imams or priests (which suggest a masculine imbalance). For chaplains, therefore, to generically refer to themselves as such (chaplain, not some other denominational/faith title), brings them into line with the accepted language of the organisation. In the example from the Ministry of Justice PSI, chaplains also submit to the language and terminology of the Ministry of Justice in two further ways: The first is that prisoners have a religious registration. This does not necessarily mean that they belong to or are members of that faith – it simply means that this is the faith into which they have chosen to register themselves whilst in prison. It would be easy to see why some faith groups outside of a custodial setting would take exception to this. Nonetheless, this is both the language and the understanding of the Ministry of Justice, and the chaplain would fall foul of the measurable standards if they were not to use the same interpretation. Second, these measurable standards are examined by 'faith advisers', not religious leaders. In the understanding of the Ministry of Justice, faith advisers, whilst holding a generic position, assist people of their own faith to fit in with the established system.

The reason then, for extensively using the PSI as a workable example of the wisdom of working closely alongside a secular model (and using their language), is that compliance with the outcomes demonstrates value for money for the tax-payer, disentangles chaplains from simply vaguely tracking



the numbers of encounters with prisoners without any real use for those statistics, and enables chaplains to plan their way of ministering to the community based on evidence. It might be argued that in large public institutions, chaplains are in the privileged position of knowing more about what is going on than any other manager. By engaging with the system under the conditions and language required of them, they are able to offer that information to the policy makers for the good of all.

One might reflect from the responses made in this chapter that a common thread is 'language'. When chaplains find themselves in the (relatively) public arena of prisons, hospitals, emergency services and out on the streets, they need to be multi-lingual – meaning that they need to be able to articulate the language of their faith to the secular setting in which they exercise their ministry. Moreover, they have to do this in a way that the hearers will understand. To articulate themselves effectively, they also need to understand the language of their hearers. This, in turn, is a three-way process, because they also have to reflect the language of the public arena back to the Church. Further, with multi-faith chaplaincy teams growing in prominence, Christian chaplains also need to fluently and sensitively speak the language of Christianity to those of other faiths – at the same time as hearing the voices and language of their non-Christian faith colleagues.

## 5. MISSION

Before moving on to the chapters addressing the disconnecting themes, this chapter on mission interjects into the study at this point because, unexpectedly, the subject did not surface with any significant weight. There is some merit though, in looking at why that might be, prior to progressing any further. This chapter begins with an acknowledgement of the omission, and then goes on to analyse the definitions offered by the denominational heads. These are followed by how chaplains on the ground view mission within the context of their chaplaincy ministry. The chapter concludes with a reflection and challenge towards champions of presence ministry.

Whilst mission is at the heart of the research question, it did not develop as the contentious issue that this study envisaged at the research-design stage. My expectation was that chaplains would engage with and perhaps challenge the theology of mission, and the impact of that theology within the context of their own chaplaincy ministry: a recognition that chaplains, whilst thoroughly immersed in their faith, must also be fully absorbed into the context of their secular setting. The assumption that chaplains would seek to link the two aspects of church and context into one theological expression was mistaken. Whilst a range of understandings and definitions emerged (some questioning the missionary model as vindication for proselytising), none were significant or persistent enough to place them under the category of a specific disconnect. Overall, mission was seen from the perspective of chaplains, host organisations and denominational heads.

The first definition came from leadership of the local Salvation Army:

Mission is proclaiming the good news of the gospel: making, teaching and nurturing believers; responding to human need by loving action and relationships; seeking to transform unjust structures of society and striving to safeguard the integrity of creation.<sup>114</sup>

In analysis of this definition I suggest that there are four phases.

These start with proclamation, move through conversion and discipleship, and conclude with social action. Perhaps this is the reason that there are so few Salvation Army chaplains placed into secular situations. With the first emphases being on proclamation and conversion, the policies of many institutions (for example, healthcare, education and prisons) would not tolerate such priorities. This is evidenced by there being only 2 Salvation Army chaplain participants out of a total of 74. Indeed, the Salvation Army leadership erroneously believed that there were no Salvation Army chaplains serving in any capacity in Cumbria.<sup>115</sup>

The local leadership of the URC directed its response, as to how mission fits in with Mission Communities, by offering the following,

Mission Communities are places where Christ's disciples are rooted and equipped to live out, and work out, God's mission. They are places where action, service, unity, worship and witness join hands in living out the Gospel invitation to life in all its fullness. They are places where Christ invites people to be His disciples and nurtures those already invited. Mission Communities are places where God's people attempt to love God with heart, mind, soul and strength and resolve to love neighbour as self.<sup>116</sup>

As with the Salvation Army's understanding of mission, one might see four phases to the URC definition. First, in identifying that they (URC chaplains) are equipped to work out God's mission. In phrasing it in this way there is

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<sup>114</sup> Respondent S1 @i84.

<sup>115</sup> Email dated 29 November 2016 from respondent S1 @i8 informing me: 'We have no chaplains in Cumbria'. In fact, at that time there were two Salvation Army chaplains in Cumbria; both Street Pastors.

<sup>116</sup> Respondent U1\*i76.

recognition of *missio Dei*; God's mission. This gives the highest emphasis to mission being fundamentally of God's will - with the Churches' mission then being to work within that framework.<sup>117</sup> (Some analysis of *missio Dei* in this context can be seen in Chapter 2, subheading Receptive Ecumenism).

Second, emanating from that theological structure is social and spiritual action (articulated as 'action, service, unity, worship and witness' in the definition). Third, the URC moves on to proclamation ('Christ invites people to be His disciples') before, fourth, concluding with a theology of loving God, at the same time resolving to love our neighbour. In contrast to the Salvation Army's understanding of mission, the URC definition is, arguably, more acceptable to a secular host organisation. This is because the URC make it clear that faith chaplaincy provision is set within a theological framework, but that its stated priority is not proclamation leading to conversion. The URC positional statement on mission sits comfortably with Ryan's view that chaplaincy 'goes to where people are, rather than waiting for them to come to religion'.<sup>118</sup>

There were similarities between the local Anglican and Methodist leaders' definitions of mission as they relate to Mission Communities. The Anglican submission was, 'Mission is everything we can do and say which will grow God's Kingdom by enabling everyone in Cumbria to know the reality

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<sup>117</sup> Christopher J.H. Wright. *The Mission of God. Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. (Nottingham: Inter Varsity, 2006), 23.

'Fundamentally, our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation'.

<sup>118</sup> Ryan, *A Very Modern Ministry*, 79.

of God in Christ and discover more of his purpose for their lives'.<sup>119</sup> This all-inclusive understanding derives from God for All<sup>120</sup> and, unlike the Salvation Army and URC definitions, offers little in the way of detail. For this reason, it remains open to interpretation.

The Methodist definition was, 'God by His nature is missionary, therefore His plan, in the words of St Paul, is to "gather up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth". Mission is to renew all of Creation into the likeness of God'.<sup>121</sup> This too, whilst acknowledging at the outset the centrality of *missio Dei*, does not constrain chaplains to an intentionally evangelistic model of mission, but leaves room for adaption to a variety of pastoral situations. Whilst all these definitions were offered by denominational faith leaders in Cumbria, the chaplains on the ground were also given the opportunity to engage with the subject of mission.

As previously stated, it was envisaged at the research-design stage that the theology of mission would appear as a significant issue for chaplains; that assumption appears to have been incorrect: most respondents did not mention the theology or impact of mission. There appeared from the responses to be only a light engagement with theology, with respondents' emphases being on the practical nature of mission as it applies in their own chaplaincy context. The majority of practising chaplains expressed a view that mission within a chaplaincy setting leaned more towards presence and

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<sup>119</sup> Respondent A1@i74.

<sup>120</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, God for All.

<sup>121</sup> Respondent M1@i75.

social action, rather than gospel proclamation. One respondent articulated this as,

Mission ... is about showing God's love in practical terms, being a presence with them, and naming God's presence when appropriate. Chaplains are called to live out their faith in Christ by showing pastoral and spiritual care, and giving out of their time and their very selves. This is what I see as my mission in my work as Chaplain.<sup>122</sup>

This understanding appears to distance itself from any interpretation of mission that includes verbal proclamation of faith. It appears to rely entirely on representative actions of love and care to bring God into the context into which they minister. This was supported by a chaplain in another field who said, 'As Chaplains we do not proselytise, we visit as the presence of Christ, we carry Him within us ... staff know us for being Christian. I don't think they see Chaplains as doing Mission'.<sup>123</sup>

These, and other chaplains who were employed by secular host organisations (rather than the Church), expressed the view that their employers' reaction to mission (as in Mission Community), would rest in one of two extremes. At one end, it was envisaged that an employer would be quite satisfied with chaplaincy using the term mission, on the understanding that their own organisation too, had a 'mission statement'. One respondent observed, 'We have a mission statement even as a secular organisation [which is] "We will have a well led team, with a shared vision, who are passionate, supportive, appreciative and non-judgemental which enables good communication to provide excellent care and effective team work"'.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Respondent 49594155.

<sup>123</sup> Respondent 49729994.

<sup>124</sup> Respondent 50652939.

This view was supported by a chaplain in another field who said, ‘Mission would be viewed in the organisation, if at all, in the secular usage of “mission statement”’.<sup>125</sup> At the other extreme, secular host organisations might well understand the word mission as unacceptable proselytising, as in the case of the previously cited (subheading 4.3.2) healthcare chaplain who challenged a senior Anglican leader about their description of mission, which the healthcare chaplain interpreted as unacceptable proselytising.<sup>126</sup>

In discussions and interviews with faith leaders, as well as other promoters of Mission Communities and chaplains on the ground, one question that frequently arose was, ‘What do we mean by mission’? Indeed, throughout the whole research project, time was spent addressing definitions: chaplains, community, impact, sacraments, ecumenism and unity were all, at some stage, under the scrutiny question ‘What do we mean by ...?’ In asking ‘what do we mean by mission,’ a proportion of chaplains (represented by the previously cited comments of respondent A1 @i74) each articulated some discomfort in being perceived as a ‘missionary’. They feared, perhaps, Stott’s illustration of a perceived missionary to be ‘caricatured as standing under a palm tree, wearing a pith helmet and declaiming the gospel to a group of ill-clad “natives” sitting respectfully around him on the ground’.<sup>127</sup> To some chaplains, this picture may translate into themselves being the one preaching the gospel to needy, dependent and vulnerable patients, prisoners and other

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<sup>125</sup> Respondent 4886419.

<sup>126</sup> Respondent A1 @i74 at a meeting in Bishop’s House (which I attended and witnessed) on 4 October 2016.

<sup>127</sup> John Stott and Christopher J.H. Wright, *Christian Mission in the Modern World: Updated and Expanded*. (Downers Grove: IVP, 2015), 16.

service users. Without exception, this concept was rejected. Nevertheless, one example did arise in which a chaplain appeared to locate themselves as personally indispensable to vulnerable people in need.

In this illustration the lead chaplain, without apparent harmful intent, placed themselves at the centre of the team with the statement, 'I always personally attend to cases of need or hardship rather than ask another team member. After all, it is me who has the personal relationships. When folk are in need, they don't want a stranger turning up on their doorstep'.<sup>128</sup> Although without further evidence, the researcher was left with the impression that this particular lead chaplain cultivated personal relationships in a way that did indeed potentially lend itself to the promotion of the culture of dependency illustrated (and ultimately dismissed) by Stott and Wright. This chaplain, who was keen to be of practical and personal assistance to those in need, is far removed from the Stott and Wright illustration, where evangelism and the preaching of the gospel to 'the lost' is the central and primary function of mission. Whilst open to criticism for their egocentric leadership style, this chaplain very much appeared to be representing chaplains in other fields, whose understanding of mission is not to be a preacher in a specialised mission-field of vulnerable service users, but to stand alongside those in need as a representative of Christ. For many, the emphasis of mission is on being a Christian 'presence' rather than an opportunist evangelist.

Whilst those in the Stott and Wright camp might understand a fully orbéd view of mission to be a balanced partnership between evangelism and

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<sup>128</sup> Respondent M1@a4.



social action in presence, this research did not uncover any evidence for such a balance. No chaplain spoke or wrote about openly proclaiming the gospel in their field of chaplaincy. Whilst one chaplain did articulate that being a Christian social presence led to opportunities for that proclamation, they did not feel it appropriate to speak of their Christian faith, lest they be accused of proselytising. They also thought that the use of words was unnecessary, asking, 'Doesn't the collar and the good work that I am doing give the gospel message in a better way than getting out a Bible and quoting it?'<sup>129</sup> Without using the same words, a significant proportion of chaplains articulated a similar sentiment in suggesting that simply being a Christian presence was, in itself, a strong and visible proclamation of the love of Christ and therefore of the Christian mission. Examples of these shared thoughts can be seen in responses such as: '... with the remit of listening, caring and helping';<sup>130</sup> 'As chaplains, our mission is to listen, to show compassion, to represent the unconditional love of God for all';<sup>131</sup> and 'We visit as the presence of Christ, we carry Him with us'.<sup>132</sup>

Reflecting on the emphasis of presence, it might have been reasonable to expect chaplains to raise theological questions around the issue of God's omnipresence and omnipotence. Picking up on the statement of respondent 49729994 (that 'we carry Him with us'), one might challenge the suggestion implied by the respondent that God is not in that place (and therefore cannot act), unless 'we carry Him there' by our presence. The

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<sup>129</sup> Respondent A1\*d20.

<sup>130</sup> Respondent 50663178.

<sup>131</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>132</sup> Respondent 49729994.

contrasting theological position that chaplains might have been expected to engage with is whether, or not, God is present (and may act) in every place, regardless of the presence of a chaplain to represent Him. The findings of this study suggest that chaplains see their role as practical and pastoral: the underpinning theology apparently being that chaplains, by their own presence, incarnate the presence and power of God.

## 6. THEMES OF DISCONNECTION

Arising from a thematic analysis of the data collected, five themes appear to have surfaced which suggest why chaplains perceive that they are disconnected from the ecumenical Mission Communities initiative. The following chapters examine each theme under three subheadings:

- i) Identifying the weight of the collective view. This subheading brings together what can be reasonably presented as a consolidated position by those chaplains who chose to respond.
- ii) Presenting alternatives to the collective view. After ascertaining the well-accepted position, this subheading presents evidence which challenges the views expressed. These come from other chaplains as well as outside commentators. The reason for including this balance is to fulfil the outcome stated in the Introduction, that this research might challenge and contribute to the ways that chaplains engage and function after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this thesis.
- iii) Impact of the issue on chaplains. After setting out the views and alternatives of each theme, this subheading identifies precisely how the positions and alternatives might impact upon chaplains using the definition of impact previously stated as that which:
  - a) Results in a chaplain changing their working practice with either colleagues or service users.
  - b) Causes a chaplain to rethink their theological position in any way.

c) Apparently affects the relationship between the chaplain and the people or organisations that they serve.<sup>133</sup>

This process is subject to a transparent acknowledgement that the author has their own history within the field of chaplaincy ministry: an ordained minister who currently holds the Bishop of Carlisle's licence to minister as 'Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle'. Moreover, the researcher has exercised a prison ministry for over 40 years and, as such, accepts that there is some degree of institutionalisation in their thinking and evaluation process. The conscious knowledge of these personal influences, prejudices and gaps in wider chaplaincy experience all combine to make the author more self-aware as the issues are critically analysed.

The five disconnecting themes do not all carry the same weight and strength of opinion. However, the first theme under consideration (ecumenism), provoked, by far, the most response from chaplains.

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<sup>133</sup> See 4.1 Impact.

## 7. DISCONNECTING THEME 1 – ECUMENISM

This chapter identifies that chaplains have reservations about the ecumenical basis of Mission Communities. Absorbed into general concerns are specifics such as: sacraments; same-sex issues; women in Christian leadership; relinquishing of doctrinal ‘truth’; formation of a new denomination; links with an Established Church.

These concerns are then weighed against other chaplains who express a strong desire for unity and the positive aspects which may result from local ecumenism leading to Receptive Ecumenism, and even the potential that a new denomination may hold.

The chapter concludes with suggesting how chaplains may be impacted by ecumenical Mission Communities.

### *7.1 Ecumenism – Establishing the Weight of the Collective View*

Written responses and interviews revealed passionate opinions from chaplains regarding the ecumenical nature of Mission Communities. The predominant trend was for respondents to highlight the tensions of working with other denominations. This is evidenced by the tide of negative comments that arose when asked specifically about perceived doctrinal difficulties. Significantly, these include concerns about:

- i) How various sacramental differences can be reconciled.
- ii) Contrasting denominational understandings of same-sex issues.
- iii) Local pockets of resistance to women in positions of Christian leadership.

- iv) Relinquishing distinctive denominational 'truth'. Related to this particular concern are doubts about drifting into a new denomination.
- v) Misgivings about being yoked with an Established Church.

First though, this subheading begins with a strong diatribe from two respondents who spoke at length, and in emphatic terms, about a whole range of disjointed concerns, some of which overlap into other disconnecting themes.

The first argued that theological perspectives would remain at the heart of their own objections, citing the three most significant obstructions as 'Predestination and election ..., Judicial substitutional theory of the atonement and non-acceptance of apostolic succession'.<sup>134</sup> As the interview developed it was uncertain as to which of these things were disagreed with, and which ones were acceptable to the respondent. Nevertheless, when asked for their view about how ecumenical Mission Communities might work out in practical terms, the same respondent strongly articulated the opinion that, 'They aren't ecumenical, they aren't mission, and they aren't communities'.<sup>135</sup> The rationale behind this statement appeared to lie in the respondent's belief that, ecumenically, the whole concept was inherently flawed by 'non-acceptance of apostolic succession ... Methodists in the UK reject episcopacy – as do the URC ... the Salvation Army rejects the

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<sup>134</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>135</sup> Respondent 49483327.

sacraments'.<sup>136</sup> In developing the sacramental argument against ecumenical Mission Communities, the respondent held that a major obstacle would be the 'rejection of the real presence in the eucharist'.<sup>137</sup> Given a platform to do so, this person voiced passionately held and strong beliefs that they clearly wished to express forcibly to me. However, in conclusion they appeared (reluctantly?) to accept that doing Christian ministry together with like-minded others may have some benefits. Despite that, the respondent still wished to finish with, 'They [Mission Communities] aren't really ecumenical. They are convenient forms of social affinity for the like-minded'.<sup>138</sup> Almost as an apparent afterthought, following this summary statement, the respondent then made the comment, 'Acceptance of same-sex issues will be tricky for Church of England Evangelicals to avoid'. This theme is explored under a separate heading.

The other respondent who wished to voice their objection to ecumenical Mission Communities also shared the view that issues around same-sex might be an obstacle to chaplaincy. This person stated, '... different views re same-sex civil partnerships and weddings; including the clergy. There is very different church law on this'.<sup>139</sup> In addition, this chaplain shared with the previous respondent, but from a different perspective, the difficulty of reconciling the practice of the eucharist/holy communion between the traditions. They observed that, in their tradition, the rite was, 'Much less

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<sup>136</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>137</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>138</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>139</sup> Respondent 50652939.

venerated',<sup>140</sup> at which the 'Communicants do not go forward'<sup>141</sup> to a place of reception that is understood to be 'a table [for the elements] – not an altar'.<sup>142</sup> Furthermore, this respondent specified precisely where they believed the ecumenical initiative was flawed: a significant difference of theological understanding concerning priests and church hierarchy. They wished to uphold the concept of a 'priesthood of all believers. There are no bishops in the Church of Scotland. All ministers are equal ... [the] Church of Scotland have ordained elders, who are seen to be equal, theologically, to ministers of word and sacrament'.<sup>143</sup> Continuing on the Church governance theme, it appears that the respondent wished to make a point about the merits of a denomination that is independent of the State. They articulated that the 'Queen is not the Head of our denomination. We are self-governing'.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, they gave what they perceived to be an objective example of the State Church giving preference to its own, with the observation, 'In terms of "roles" and "jobs", it would seem that most of these are going to Anglicans'.<sup>145</sup> This respondent was not alone in expressing the opinion that partnership with the Church of England is a potential hazard to the success of Mission Communities. Comments from other chaplains with a similar concern included, 'The greatest challenge, I suppose, is that I am in a non-episcopal church'.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>141</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>142</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>143</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>144</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>145</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>146</sup> Respondent 50803069.



Other chaplains, whilst not appearing to write off partnership with Anglicans, observed that, whereas Methodists, URC and the Salvation Army had reached a common mind over certain issues (or, at least, a common public perception), the Anglican Church are seen to still have pockets of resistance to same-sex relationships and the role of women in leadership.

The question of reconciling differences of sacramental practice is dealt with as a discrete theme in Chapter 9. However, some chaplains included this in their general questioning of the ecumenical direction of Mission Communities. Two respondents posed the question of how, if interchangeability were to come to full fruition, would the giving and receiving of the sacraments work in practice? A general worry from one was simply that the denominations have a completely different understanding of sacraments, expressed as, 'We ... understand the Sacraments differently – something which is very important to consider'.<sup>147</sup> A more specific concern from the other respondent was that it is '... difficult for a Salvation Army officer to minister to a local church of the other traditions if they are not in a position to preside'.<sup>148</sup> If the sacraments were a cause of unease to some chaplains, the weight of opinion was eclipsed by fears of losing historically held distinctive 'truths', and drifting into an altogether new denomination.

The responses suggest that not only are doctrinal differences a reality to chaplains, but that they still matter. A significant number of chaplains appear to be saying that, from their standpoint, ecumenical Mission Communities present so many difficulties that they will not work in practice;

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<sup>147</sup> Respondent 50652939

<sup>148</sup> Respondent 49487537.

but some comments may also hint at something between the lines. For example, 'I don't go [to other denominations] – their doctrine is man-made'.<sup>149</sup> This comment alludes to a strong desire to keep a distance from those whose doctrines are not orthodox in their eyes. However, this was not followed up at interview, since the respondent declined to do so. What appears to be at stake for them is 'truth'. If this analysis is correct, it further complicates the issue, because the source of Christian truth is contestable.

It might be argued that prior to the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, the guardian and authority of Christian truth was the Roman Catholic Church. Following the Reformation, other groups of Christian believers emerged and grew. Whilst they were all centred on a Trinitarian framework, they remained doctrinally distanced because their understanding of the truth (or how salvation was received) differed significantly from the other groups. Thus, it might be argued, denominationalism based on defence of Christian orthodoxy was born. It would appear, from the negative responses to ecumenism, that it is this defence of truth (as understood by respondents) that lies at the centre of some concerns.

Supportive of the concept of denominationalism (and therefore anti-ecumenist) are chaplains who contend that they have, with integrity, formed an opinion that their particular church holds a specific view of Christian truth, and the means of salvation which has attracted them to it - to the exclusion of the other Christian denominational partners. Therefore, to now come together

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<sup>149</sup> Respondent 50266506.

in such close partnership would negate the legitimate differences of belief that they hold. Moreover, whilst Mission Communities are a purely local arrangement with no legal standing, they do not reflect the position of the individual national churches and their doctrinal policies. In summary, one respondent strongly made the point that Methodist chaplains may take the view that they [as a body] left the Anglican Church two hundred years ago. With few (if any) significant doctrinal changes, they see no theological reason to come together now, at the expense of doctrinal truth as they understand it.<sup>150</sup> URC and Salvation Army chaplains might make a similar argument from a slightly different perspective. Amongst chaplains there is then a protective strand of thinking that holds close to the historic divisions from whence they came, as well as a belief that churches have, in the past, split for good theological reasons. Moreover, there was also a negative mood amongst respondents that Cumbria was heading towards loosely forming a new denomination, for which some had no appetite.<sup>151</sup>

From a URC perspective, a senior person within the denomination explained that the prospect of being consumed into full Christian unity (ultimately meaning a new denomination that encompasses all Trinitarian Christians), is one that is entirely in keeping with their *raison d'être*.<sup>152</sup> This may be part of the reason for some chaplains reacting against the formation of Mission Communities – their point being that, if this is the stated intent of one of the signatory parties, then the distinctiveness of the others is under

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<sup>150</sup> Respondent M2@a39.

<sup>151</sup> Respondent A1@i80.

<sup>152</sup> Respondent U1\*76.

threat. It is the prospect of a new denomination, arising out of a desire for unity, that forms the basis of some objections. Chaplains interviewed did not necessarily believe there was a strategic background plan to form a new denomination, but were simply concerned that the practical outworking of ecumenical Mission Communities might bring everything down to the lowest common denominator of conformity, at the cost of some central tenets of faith. The most extreme expression of this fear was articulated as, 'Doctrinal apostasy ...'<sup>153</sup> In addition to this, the holding of some level of control over decision making from a denominational partner appeared to be at the heart of the comment, 'The Queen is not the Head of our denomination. We are self-governing'.<sup>154</sup> As previously noted, one respondent felt that this assumption of privilege resulted (within Cumbrian Mission Communities) in, '... roles and jobs mainly going to Anglicans'.<sup>155</sup> The argument here is that the system favours Anglicans because, of all faith leaders, only Anglican bishops hold a seat in the House of Lords – and that daily they open Parliament with Anglican prayers. In addition, critics highlight that the Church of England also hold a privileged place in the House of Commons through the Second Church Estates Commissioner, who must be both a Member of Parliament and a confirmed Anglican. Furthermore, the House of Commons has its own chaplain (necessarily an Anglican), who leads the Commons in Christian prayers at the start of each day of sitting. These high-profile public/religious posts, which emanate from the link between Church and State, lend to the

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<sup>153</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>154</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>155</sup> Respondent 50652939.

perception that the Church of England is the spokesperson for all denominations. This, it is argued, is a position that is detrimental to others, particularly 'non-Anglican chaplains exercising a ministry within the public square'.<sup>156</sup> Based on the evidence of comments received from respondents who see difficulties with the ecumenical focus of Mission Communities, one might summarise their position as:

First, we do not wish to dilute our historic and traditional beliefs in order to accommodate the views of others. Equally, we do not wish others to dilute their own core beliefs to accommodate us.

Second, we do not wish to evolve into a new denomination.

Third, we do not wish to be yoked with an Established Church that is inextricably linked to the State.

## *7.2 Ecumenism – Presenting Alternatives to the Collective View*

This subheading looks at some of the contrasting views of chaplains and outside commentators. It seeks to meet the stated outcome that this research might challenge and contribute to the ways that chaplains engage and function after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this thesis. It presents a case for local ecumenism leading to Receptive Ecumenism, before suggesting that there may be some positive aspects to the formation of an altogether new denomination. First though, there is an acknowledgement of the overwhelming response in favour of unity (but not conformity).

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<sup>156</sup> Respondent 5065293.

Even the respondent who was adamant that Mission Communities are not ecumenical, not mission and not communities, sought to elevate the concept of unity by stating, 'It ... may be a positive way forward'.<sup>157</sup> In exploring this apparent paradox at interview, the same respondent conceded, 'A willingness to work together is essential'.<sup>158</sup> In making those latter comments, alluding to warmth towards the concept of unity (after making such bold apparent anti-ecumenism statements), suggests that the respondent perceives a difference in both practice and doctrine between ecumenism and unity. Whether or not this is a divide that can be identified is unclear. Nonetheless, some chaplains did indeed use the terms ecumenism and unity synonymously. Acknowledging that ecumenism is at the heart of Mission Communities, one respondent said, 'I think it is a good idea. God is unity and love; divisions are culturally made'.<sup>159</sup> Echoing that same sentiment (and interpreting Jesus as praying for ecumenism as a synonym for unity) was the observation, 'Ecumenical Mission Communities are what Christ prayed for. The closer we are able to work together the nearer we get to Christ's love for one another'.<sup>160</sup>

Working together needs to observe, and perhaps define, boundaries. Using the term 'Christian unity' would, in the eyes of both a Jehovah's

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<sup>157</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>158</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>159</sup> Respondent 50266506.

<sup>160</sup> Respondent 49729994.

Witness<sup>161</sup> and an adherent of the Church of Latter-Day Saints<sup>162</sup> include them too, since they see themselves as Christians. Whilst drawing attention to and acknowledging this point, another respondent sought to define Christians as those who believe in the Trinity, and to that end, concerning unity, said, 'We all believe in the Trinity – this to me is enough to work together ... we all need to celebrate and understand each other's differences and share our faith with each other'.<sup>163</sup> The overall benefits of closer working together between partnership denominations, whether that be labelled as ecumenism or unity, was captured in two summary statements by different respondents:

'I can only see this ... as beneficial'<sup>164</sup> and, '[ecumenism] ... can only be a good thing, as long as all denominations are prepared to be flexible and to accept differences'.<sup>165</sup> It might be understood that all these responses in favour of ecumenism take the view that unity is not the same as conformity: that local ecumenism is not equivalent to binding oneself to the framework of another national church.

Local ecumenism allows clergy to share practice, ideas and resources. Local ecumenism has its focus on the faith needs and

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<sup>161</sup> JW.Org, "Jehovah's Witnesses", [cited 4 July 2018]. Online: <https://www.jw.org/en/> 'We come from hundreds of ethnic and language backgrounds, yet we are united by common goals. Above all, we want to honor Jehovah, the God of the Bible and the Creator of all things. We do our best to imitate Jesus Christ and are proud to be called Christians'.

<sup>162</sup> Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, "Are Mormons Christian?", [cited 4 July 2018]. Online: [www.lds.org/topics/christians?lang=eng](http://www.lds.org/topics/christians?lang=eng) 'Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints unequivocally affirm themselves to be Christians. They worship God the Eternal Father in the name of Jesus Christ'.

<sup>163</sup> Respondent 51406896.

<sup>164</sup> Respondent 50803069.

<sup>165</sup> Respondent 50659533.

requirements of social communities. Local ecumenism seeks to establish common ground where it is most pertinent. Local ecumenism promotes understanding and tolerance of those whose traditions are historically different, thus enhancing social cohesion far beyond the sphere of the worshipping community. In essence, local ecumenism draws worshipping communities into a more intimate relationship. In promoting local ecumenism, Churches Together in Cumbria has a three-fold mission: 'To work for justice through the Social Responsibility Forum; to encourage environmental action through the "Living Lightly" programme; to work and pray for the unity to which Jesus Christ calls us ... through the county-wide Declaration of Covenant Partnership (Mission Communities)'. A significant contributor to Churches Together in Cumbria drew attention to the fact that Churches Together in England believe that intimate relationships are borne from Receptive Ecumenism.<sup>166</sup>

Receptive Ecumenism, whilst having strong academic credentials, is essentially very simple. Instead of asking what other traditions need to learn from us, we ask what our tradition needs to learn from them. The assumption is that if all were asking this question seriously and acting upon it, then all would be moving in ways that would both deepen our authentic respective identities and draw us into more intimate relationships.<sup>167</sup> One draws from this understanding that Receptive Ecumenism rejects the notion that one

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<sup>166</sup> Respondent M2\*185.

<sup>167</sup> Churches Together in England, "Receptive Ecumenism". n.d., [cited 17 July 2017]. Online:  
[www.cte.org.uk/Groups/91312/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive\\_Ecumenism/What\\_is\\_Receptive/What\\_is\\_Receptive.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/91312/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive_Ecumenism/What_is_Receptive/What_is_Receptive.aspx)



denomination has all the theological answers, as well as all the resources, to operate independently at either local or national level. It is, however, local communities that concern this study, and it can be argued that chaplaincy models within the Mission Communities are enriching the identity of Christian presence when they accept that it is healthy to receive from other Christian denominations, and publicly work together in pursuit of a common good. Indeed, it has been suggested that, far from denominations losing their individual identity, where Receptive Ecumenism is employed Anglicans actually become more Anglican, Methodists more Methodist, the URC more URC and the Salvation Army more Salvationist. Whilst Andrew Todd helpfully interprets this as, ‘... building theological bridges across cultures that respect insight into the divine that comes from different traditions of belief’,<sup>168</sup> Peter J. Leithart more specifically asserts,

We listen to each other to answer the question, ‘What can we learn, or receive, with integrity from our various partners in order to facilitate our own growth together into deepened communion in Christ and the Spirit?’ Pursuing Receptive Ecumenism, Christians fall in love with the presence of God in the people, practices, and structures of other Christian traditions.<sup>169</sup>

Whilst Leithart is correct that Christian denominations can and should learn from each other through the principles of Receptive Ecumenism, he gives no weight to the legitimate arguments of distinctiveness and historical division of genuinely held belief of denominations. This may well be a deliberate

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<sup>168</sup> John Caperon, Andrew Todd and James Walters, eds, *A Christian Theology of Chaplaincy* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2018), 30.

<sup>169</sup> Peter J. Leithart, “First Things”. 27 Feb 2015, [cited 17 July 2017]. Online: [www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/02/receptive-ecumenism](http://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2015/02/receptive-ecumenism)

omission on his part, for the first principle that Leithart is holding to is that the churches primary focus should be towards God, rather than traditions.

Paul Murray and the Durham Centre for Catholic Studies hold that the diagnostic task of Receptive Ecumenism is undergirded by several methodological principles.<sup>170</sup> Whilst some might argue that the culmination of these principles necessarily results in the formation of a new denomination, one could equally assert that this is not a bad thing. Indeed, there may be a case to be made for the notion that ecumenism leads to genuine unity, and a dissolution of denominations; a position which may (or may not) be drawn from scripture.

There may be a number of reasons to believe that the formation of an altogether new denomination would be a positive outcome of ecumenical Mission Communities. The most compelling is that it would present an opportunity to do away with all the former issues of secondary importance that have been used by some to promote division. The founding of a new denomination made up of Anglicans, Methodist, URC and Salvation Army may be an opportunity to develop the ecumenical work that has already been part of the process of Mission Communities coming into being. The next step might be to assess what fundamentally binds Christians together today as the Body of Christ. This assessment should take into account that we have moved on historically and culturally. What divided us in the past may not be relevant today, and should not be allowed to hold back the goal of unity

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<sup>170</sup> See Appendix 10, Durham Centre for Catholic Studies: Principles of Receptive Ecumenism.

amongst Christians. Indeed, it might be argued that division promotes division. As long as denominations are prepared to hold on to what has historically divided them, the more likely they are to introduce contemporary obstacles in order to support the continuing rift. The modern debate about same-sex relationships may be a relevant example: this is covered more fully under a dedicated heading elsewhere in this study. One respondent suggested that another valid argument in favour of the formation of a new denomination is that it would allow freedom to live as a harmonious, authentic, Christian family unit.<sup>171</sup>

To live as a harmonious family unit means living together with all our flaws and contradictions: all our likes, dislikes and disputes. The strand that holds families together is the common bloodline. The argument for a new denomination that has evolved from the ecumenical process, is that which holds mainstream Christians together is our adoption into the family of God. This is not a radical new concept: a precedent has been set and is modelled by the United Church of Christ (UCC). The development of the history of the UCC is comprehensively recorded in Margaret Rowland Post's, 'A History of the United Church of Christ'.<sup>172</sup> After tracing the history of the UCC back through the Protestant reformers, the first Apostles of Jesus and Judaism, she then goes on to outline how the UCC successfully brought together into one new denomination four previously discrete groups of churches: this was the birth of the UCC in 1957, and at one point claimed 6,500 congregations

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<sup>171</sup> Respondent U1\*i76.

<sup>172</sup> United Church of Christ, "The Early Church". n.d., [cited 27 July 2017]. Online: [www.ucc.org/about-us\\_short-course\\_the-early-church](http://www.ucc.org/about-us_short-course_the-early-church)

with 1,800,000 members.<sup>173</sup> Nevertheless, more recently the UCC itself acknowledged a steady numerical decline, with whole congregations withdrawing from membership.<sup>174</sup>

### *7.3 Ecumenism – Impact of Ecumenism on Chaplains.*

As previously noted, impact, for the purpose of this study, is defined as that which:

- a) Results in a chaplain changing their working practice with either colleagues or service users, or
- b) Causes a chaplain to rethink their theological position in any way, or
- c) Apparently affects the relationship between the chaplain and the people or organisations that they serve.

Some chaplains may find that they have to change their working practice due to the requirement to ‘buy-in’ to ecumenism. In the eyes of all four faith leaders, the centrality of ecumenism to the successful development of Mission Communities is paramount.

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<sup>173</sup> United Church of Christ, ‘The Early Church’. n.d.

<sup>174</sup> The United Church of Christ, “Who’s Growing in the UCC, Who’s Not, and Why”. n.d., [cited 9 October 2018]. Online: [www.ucc.org/whos-growing-in-the-ucc](http://www.ucc.org/whos-growing-in-the-ucc)

The very foundation of reorganisation is built upon this shared understanding, and there can be no deviation from it. Indeed, every clergy applicant for an Anglican vacancy receives an explicit letter of instruction from the Bishop of Carlisle.<sup>175</sup> It is the implicit suggestion in the bishop's letter that a form of ecumenism is being imposed, which appears to have unsettled a number of chaplains. Whilst this is a valid interpretation, it does not give sufficient acknowledgement to the 'wherever possible' rider at the end of the letter. Unrest amongst chaplains of all partner denominations comes from the fear that they will be thrust into a conformity that they do not wish to own. However, the issuing of such a letter to potential applicants, rather than a directive to those already in post, signals a gradual move towards a fully ecumenical model by only receiving into Mission Communities those who are already in agreement with it. The bishop's letter, it can be argued, simply makes transparent the direction of travel, and invites those who are in sympathy to continue with their application, armed with the knowledge necessary to take Cumbria forward ecumenically. Interviews and responses from chaplains frequently interchange the words ecumenism and unity.

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<sup>175</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, "Letter from the Bishop". June 2017 [cited 3 August 2017]. Online: [www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/searchresults.html?mact=Search%2Ccntnt01%2Cdosearch%2C0&cntnt01returnid=248&cntnt01searchinput=Letter+from+the+Bishop&x=11&y=10](http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/searchresults.html?mact=Search%2Ccntnt01%2Cdosearch%2C0&cntnt01returnid=248&cntnt01searchinput=Letter+from+the+Bishop&x=11&y=10) 'Thank you for enquiring about the possibility of a post in Carlisle Diocese. I hope that this letter will help to explain something of our current context. First, there is an expectation that all clergy ministering in the Diocese of Carlisle will be committed to the key diocesan priority of Growing Disciples ... ecumenical strategies ... have been brought together under the heading 'God for All' ... those appointed to stipendiary and non-stipendiary posts within the Diocese will therefore be people who are willing to welcome these proposals ... putting them into practice. They will recognise that this will often mean working in new ways, both for themselves and for parishioners ... they will need to be ... committed to working ecumenically ... wherever possible'.

The synonymous use of ecumenism and unity is not helpful when considering the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models in Cumbria. Unity means synchronising all the good that partner denominations bring in the sharing of their common theme: to stand alongside the community in which they minister in the social action that emanates from the proclamation of the gospel. Unity shares the joys and trials of all that is done co-operatively. Ecumenism, however, is interpreted on the ground as conformity. There is a fear that chaplains in their places of ministry will be expected to conform to the models and structures of another denomination – or even that they are being driven or manipulated by the Anglican Church. Perhaps it is this that has produced the backlash from non-Anglican respondents. Whilst, in a parish context, these anxieties may diminish as more clergy arrive from outside who are willing to comply, the concerns about ecumenism from more autonomous chaplains will not easily be allayed, despite the many examples of chaplains independently working together across Cumbria. Finally, when considering the minimum criteria for a realistic ecumenical project, one should not discount the historic (19<sup>th</sup> century)

Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.<sup>176</sup> The four-point statement of agreed beliefs amongst Protestant denominations were identified as:

The Holy Scriptures as the Word of God.

The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as the rule of faith.

The two sacraments (baptism and holy communion).

The historical episcopate.

If the Quadrilateral were applied to the current debate in Cumbria regarding ecumenism, it is likely that most would be in agreement with the first three statements, with only episcopacy being the dividing issue. Indeed, episcopacy has been raised as a separate, standalone topic and is addressed under a dedicated chapter in this study.

Whilst the viability of a new denomination emerging in the near future is unlikely, those chaplains who believe that Mission Communities are drifting towards a new denomination would undoubtedly have to consider their theological position thoroughly. Perhaps those who expressed concerns were simply emphasising their anxieties about what they thought might be the end result of an enforced ecumenism. It is difficult to imagine any of the respondents having this issue as a particular threat to their ministry.

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<sup>176</sup> Stephen Sykes and John Booty, eds., *The Study of Anglicanism* (London: SPCK, 1988), 40, 219, 220.

'At the Lambeth Conference of 1888, what has become known as the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral was adopted. This had its origins in 1870 in *The Church Idea, An Essay toward Unity* by William Reed Huntington (1838-1909), an American Episcopalian priest. The Lambeth form of the Quadrilateral contains four elements held to be a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing, made toward Home Reunion: the Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary for salvation; the Creeds as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith; the sacraments of baptism and holy communion; and the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the Church'. Whilst the Quadrilateral was originally intended as a basis for discussion, it has subsequently been treated as a non-negotiable basis for ecumenical union.

Moreover, the proposal of a new denomination would inevitably be explored (at least initially) outside the context of chaplaincy, and would therefore be a long way off any impact on current chaplains. Whilst acknowledging that chaplains have raised it as an issue, there is little prospect of it having any significant impact upon chaplaincy models in Mission Communities in the short to mid-term. Linked closely with concerns about a new denomination arising, were concerns about being absorbed into the Established Church.

The impact of forming a strong bond with the Church of England, as the State Church, might affect the relationship between the chaplain and the people, or organisations, which they serve. However, it would be a narrow and restricted view to believe that the Anglican Church retains its link with the State only to promote itself, and make its own voice heard above all others. The argument in favour of retaining the status quo is that establishment gives voice to all faiths. Former Blackburn Cathedral Dialogue Development Officer, Anjum Anwar, comments,

Anglicanism listens and gives voices to the outsiders. As a Muslim living in the UK, my voice needs to be heard. I believe that the Church of England plays a vital role in representing and speaking, not only for Christians, but also for people of other faiths. The Church of England is not a toothless organisation, as many seem to think, but it is a robust institution raising issues of faith in the public domain.<sup>177</sup>

Perhaps the thinking behind Anwar's statement can be understood as follows: if the Church of England becomes disestablished, the way will be clear for secularism to gradually weaken all faiths, ultimately resulting in a

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<sup>177</sup> Reform, "A good question: Should the Church of England be disestablished?" October 2014 [cited 31 July 2017]. Online: [www.reform-magazine.co.uk/2014/09/a-good-question-should-the-church-of-england-be-disestablished/](http://www.reform-magazine.co.uk/2014/09/a-good-question-should-the-church-of-england-be-disestablished/)



totally secular state where no faith group has a meaningful voice and all minorities become more vulnerable. Is disestablishment the main issue here? The points raised earlier suggest concerns that Anglicans may be privileged over other denominations in the partnerships: the perceived impact upon chaplaincy is that Mission Communities will not, ultimately, result in a level playing field.

The issue of Anglican Church and State link is not one on which chaplains on the ground have any influence. The reasons why chaplains chose to raise it as an issue is unclear: it could be that their concerns are rooted in general antipathy towards ecumenism – and reasoning that belief by the argument that the whole is being driven by the Anglican Church. Although not heavily articulated in interviews or survey responses, non-Anglican chaplains did appear uneasy with the influence that the Church of England has on local Mission Communities. Whilst accepting Mission Communities as originally an Anglican concept, and that the voice given to Area President (URC), District Chair (Methodist) and Divisional Commander (Salvation Army) is no less than that of the Anglican Bishop, dissent is still expressed. One respondent suggested that they were speaking for many others who ‘were not willing to raise their heads above the parapet’.<sup>178</sup> Others also though, did make the following sharp points about over-influence of Anglicanism in Cumbria:

‘Some Anglicans need to be more open-minded about other denominations and rid themselves of the attitude that “we are the real church”’.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Respondent M1@a4.

<sup>179</sup> Respondent 50652939.

‘(Anglican) clergy get too “precious” about someone coming to speak in their churches’.<sup>180</sup>

‘Methodists are doing all the running and Anglicans co-operate but never initiate anything’.<sup>181</sup>

‘I can give you an example from an article submitted by an Anglican to our village magazine which, despite a vibrant Methodist presence in the village, makes us feel as though we are totally irrelevant’.<sup>182</sup>

If these comments genuinely represent a significant body of opinion, then establishment certainly will have an impact on chaplains in Mission Communities. An underlying sense of suspicion and antipathy towards Anglicanism will prevent any meaningful progression in the sphere of chaplaincy, even if there is an evolution in a wider Cumbrian context, by means of restricting incoming clergy to those who are compliant with the initiative. However, it may also be that the small number of respondents who raised the issue of Church-State link simply want to shout louder than the rest in voicing their unease with Anglicanism in general. Given this possibility, respondents may have taken the opportunity to attach those wider negatives to the chaplaincy debate.

Overall, establishment of the Church and State will have an impact on chaplaincy models in Mission Communities. This is because the Church of England, subject to any major reforms, will continue to have (at least the perception of) an overarching representative Christian voice throughout the

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<sup>180</sup> Respondent 01 @i43.

<sup>181</sup> Respondent 50266506.

<sup>182</sup> Respondent M1@a4.

United Kingdom. This perceived representation filters through to local worshipping communities, and local worshipping communities necessarily include chaplaincy models within it.

In conclusion, the success of ecumenical Mission Communities is not dependent upon chaplains rethinking their theological position. They are free to operate within the orthodox boundaries of their own denomination.

Nevertheless, chaplains who have expressed a deep suspicion of ecumenical working might find that they are challenged by the practicalities of being brought together in such a way. Bringing together all the responses, positions and counter-positions, one might suggest that the impact of ecumenical Mission Communities on chaplains and chaplaincy models is to solidify their sense of being separate from the Church. This exposes chaplains to the risk of being cut off from their sources of authority and accountability. From the collective responses, at first sight there appears to be a sense that the development of an ecumenical diocese is an attempt to bring conformity by any means. It can be seen from the responses that the concept of unity is universally popular, but that actually working together ecumenically is a different matter altogether – not least because of the traditional and doctrinal differences that exist. Though not evidenced, there is an underlying perception from all the above responses that unity really means the other denominations conforming to one's own in every aspect.

In summary, I interpret that this disconnect is seated in the perception of the partnership being an uneven playing field: the Church of England are seen as the driver (and controller) of Mission Communities. The result of this

is that the Free Churches observe the role given to Anglicanism as the Established Church and perceive from this that they will always be subservient (in a sense) to the national 'faith spokesperson'.

## 8. DISCONNECTING THEME 2 – SAME-SEX ISSUES

This chapter begins by acknowledging the diversity of opinion amongst chaplains and the place of legislation, before going on to raising the question of how much weight the voice of dissenting faith-based opinion holds. The current position of each denomination on the subject of same-sex marriage is then compared, and a conclusion drawn about how an acknowledgement of diversity of opinion may still allow chaplains to operate side-by-side with integrity.

### *8.1 Same-Sex Issues – Establishing the Weight of the Collective View*

Whilst this study does not rehearse the well-documented general arguments that revolve around same-sex issues, it does acknowledge that, second to concerns about the direction that ecumenism would take Cumbria, were anxieties and statements expressed around same-sex issues. The context of these statements is that 95.45% of respondents described themselves as 'heterosexual/straight', whilst just one individual (representing 4.55% of the total) preferred not to say.

Unlike the issue of ecumenism, where chaplains appeared to be either 'for' or 'against', the same-sex question is more complex and less binary. None of the respondents were saying that same-sex marriage in church, for example, was something that they applauded and would want to promote. Equally, none indicated that they were against same-sex marriage in church and just could not countenance it. The common concern was that there was

such a divergence of opinion and practice within the partner denominations, that it would have a severe and adverse impact on chaplaincy, as expressed in the statement, 'We have different views on same-sex civil partnerships and weddings; as well as same-sex clergy. We also have different church law on these things'.<sup>183</sup> However, those who support marriage and same-sex relationships appear to do so on the basis of exercising their ministry contextually in the secular space into which they are invited. The voice of the Church is heard in this space and, 'If we are heard as lacking in love, our ability to proclaim the God of love as revealed in Jesus Christ is damaged or negated. No Church that is committed to God's mission can live comfortably with that situation'.<sup>184</sup> The summarised argument of one respondent is: if the voice of the Church is out of step with the law, with changes in acceptable social norms and with those who wish to affirm their loving personal relationships within a faith setting, then these are the hallmarks of a church lacking in love.<sup>185</sup> The consensus of respondents who take this view generally indicates that opposition to a broad range of same-sex issues will render chaplains irrelevant in the (often secular) areas in which they exercise a ministry. Moreover, it speaks of concerns around the apparent acceptance of inequality.

The Equality Act of 2010 was designed to protect people, not only in the workplace but also in wider society. Some chaplains see themselves as

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<sup>183</sup> Respondent 50652939.

<sup>184</sup> Church of England, "Marriage and Same Sex Relationships After the Shared Conversations". [cited 15 August 2017]. Online: [www.churchofengland.org/media/3863472/gs-2055-marriage-and-same-sex-relationships-after-the-shared-conversations-report-from-the-house-of-bishops.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/3863472/gs-2055-marriage-and-same-sex-relationships-after-the-shared-conversations-report-from-the-house-of-bishops.pdf)

<sup>185</sup> Respondent U1\*i76.

predominantly exercising their ministry in that wider society, rather than in a church-based organisation. Indeed, some point out that their chaplaincy role is undertaken in the public sector, which often pays their salaries.<sup>186</sup> In this respect, the law is clear,

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) tackle prejudice, and
- (b) promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

The relevant protected characteristics are -

Age;  
Disability;  
Gender Re-Assignment;  
Marriage and Civil Partnership;  
Pregnancy and Maternity;  
Race;  
Religion or Belief;  
Sex;  
Sexual Orientation.<sup>187</sup>

The weight of argument proposed by public-sector chaplains is that, if they are not fully conformed to both the letter and spirit of the law in terms of sexual orientation, then not only is their integrity questioned by their employer, but also their suitability to minister in that place. One chaplain argued that it was not a case of being 'for or against' any particular sexual orientation, but simply one of being seen to be compliant with a government

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<sup>186</sup> Respondent A1\*d20.

<sup>187</sup> The National Archives, "Equality Act 2010", 2011, [cited 20 August 2017]. Online: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149)

organisation who were willing to offer them a (conditional) platform for ministry, providing that they openly exercise that ministry within the spirit of the 2010 Equality Act.<sup>188</sup> This is not an unreasonable condition for a public-sector, or any other employer, to demand. Not only are employers duty-bound to uphold the law, but also a spirit of equality is one which any respectable organisation would seek to embody within the full culture of their working practice. To allow any of their employees to dissent on the grounds of a religiously doctrinal position would open their equalities policy and practice to legitimate question.

With contextuality in mind, a final consideration from chaplains who feel that it is necessary to give public support to same-sex issues is that, whatever their private thoughts, public opinion has adopted as normal, fair and acceptable all forms of sexual orientation. To disregard this would restrict chaplains' capacity to minister to the full range of individuals within their area, resulting in spiritual isolation for those who interpret the chaplaincy position as unsupportive of their needs. Chaplains from across the whole spectrum argue that this is an unacceptable position for a chaplain to find themselves in, because it places restrictions and boundaries on the range of their ministry. In contrast, one chaplain proposed that there is an equally compelling point of view, which insists that faith leaders must retain their opposition to any concept that challenges the longstanding and historically traditional position of the Church.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Respondent A1@i60.

<sup>189</sup> Respondent A1@c17



## *8.2 Same-Sex Issues – Presenting Alternatives to the Collective View*

Without recourse to rerunning all the well-documented arguments about such issues as same-sex marriage in church, the alternative argument to the one already discussed is that chaplaincy must maintain its distinctiveness in order to retain its credibility. Without addressing any particular issue, Reverend Dr Timothy Keller at the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast in 2018 emphasised religious distinction when he said, ‘British society should let Christians be different, and Muslims be different. They should not say that, “You must be secular”. Christians benefit society more when they are not just like everybody else’.<sup>190</sup> Keller is right if he is pointing out that a range of distinctive voices contribute to a more rounded society. In chaplaincy terms, that means that even if the historic and traditional view dissents from the current trend of opinion, it must still be heard. Perhaps one of the reasons that large corporations and government institutions employ independent people who are willing to ‘speak truth to power’ with a distinctive voice, is that they value having on board a ‘critical friend’ who is prepared to offer an alternative point of view which is faith-based. With this in mind one respondent argued that the real issue has been hidden behind a narrative which focusses on the physical act of sex which hides the scriptural view and

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<sup>190</sup> Bible Society, “Theresa May joins 170 Peers and MP’s at the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast”. n.d., [cited 19 July 2018]. Online: [www.biblesociety.org.uk/latest/news/theresa-may-joins-170-peers-and-mps-at-the-national-parliamentary-prayer-breakfast/](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/latest/news/theresa-may-joins-170-peers-and-mps-at-the-national-parliamentary-prayer-breakfast/)

The National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast is an annual event held in Westminster Hall and organised by cross-party parliamentarians with the permission of Black Rod, the Speaker and Lord Speaker.

definition of marriage.<sup>191</sup> This respondent suggested that the most obvious opposition to pro same-sex relationships lie in the implications behind Matthew 19:4-6, which during interview they explained thus:

Have you never read that the Creator made them from the beginning male and female?'; and he added, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be made one with his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. It follows that they are no longer two individuals: they are one flesh. What God has joined together, man must not separate. (NEB).

The traditional position, the respondent argued, is that this passage is the Biblical definition of marriage; and that six key words or phrases have linked to them particular implications that chaplains should hold to in the public execution of their ministry. The first is that the Creator made them 'male and female'. The relevant implication arising from this, they insisted, is that a Biblical definition of marriage is heterosexual. Second, the statement that a man shall 'leave' his mother and father strongly suggests that the marriage covenant is exclusive. The third implication, the respondent articulated, is one of commitment, arising from the man being 'made one' with his wife. Fourth, made one with 'his wife' lends to the argument that a Biblical definition of marriage is necessarily monogamous. The fifth implication is that marriage is permanent; this is derived from the phrase, 'they are one flesh'. Finally, the sixth implication to be extrapolated from the passage is that marriage is sacred, since it is 'what God has joined together'.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> A1 @i99.

<sup>192</sup> Respondent A1 @i99.

Whilst this respondent used a Biblical passage, and a particular interpretation of its implications, to summarise the argument against the weight of opinion of other respondents, a balanced conclusion of the two sides of the debate should note that there are other representative positions from scripture in favour of same-sex marriage.

### *8.3 Same-Sex Issues – Impact of Same-Sex Issues on Chaplains*

This subheading identifies that engaging with a particular view of scriptural authority may have impact on some chaplains by causing them to rethink their theological position. It then compares the current stance of each denomination in relation to same-sex issues, and alludes to how an understanding of the various denominational policies might impact chaplains. Finally, a conclusion is drawn about how an acknowledgement of diversity of opinion may still allow Mission Community chaplains to operate side-by-side with integrity.

Those chaplains who support same-sex marriage appear to have given the issue a high priority: a belief that non-acceptance will severely obstruct the ministry that they carry out. The counter-argument, purportedly from scripture, also makes broad assumptions on a number of levels. The first of these is that scripture will always hold sway over tradition and reason. In a study that analyses the way scripture, tradition and reason applies to the way we conduct the contemporary debate about human sexuality, John Corrie correctly identifies the counter-protagonists as holding scripture at the

apex of a very narrow-based triangle.<sup>193</sup> Whilst, on one level, this may be a powerful argument, in many chaplaincy daily scenarios the Bible is not one which is at the centre of most service users' lives. Therefore, it might be deemed to be an obstacle to the goal of presence ministry. Yet, the problem with an overwhelming desire to be on the same wave-length as secular society is that potentially chaplaincy could be reduced to simply an alternative social service-provider, defined and regulated by the standards of a non-faith agenda. This is evidenced by the case of a prison chaplain. It is reported in the press that the chaplain, an ordained Pentecostal minister, was authorised by the Managing Chaplain to lead Sunday worship in the prison once a week, and had been doing so since 2012. In May 2014 the Bible passage for the service that day was taken from 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (version unknown), which includes a reference to 'homosexuals'. Subsequently, the article reports, 'The Managing Chaplain received a complaint through the 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender' (LGBT) co-ordinator claiming that the chaplain had said, 'Marriage between homosexuals was wrong'. The end result is that the chaplain was relieved from leading services and this led to an allegation of unfair dismissal. Subsequently, the Employment Tribunal ruled that 'The quoting of a Bible in

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<sup>193</sup> John Corrie, "Doing Anglican Theology". 2007, [cited 22 August, 2017]. Online: [www.fulcrum-anglican.org.uk/articles/doing-anglican-theology/](http://www.fulcrum-anglican.org.uk/articles/doing-anglican-theology/) Whilst acknowledging scripture, tradition and reason as triangular reference points of faith, Corrie also identifies two polarised interpretations of the triangle. One understanding is that tradition and reason predominate, with scripture given less significance. Visually, the triangle is relatively wide at the base, and short in height. The other extreme of interpretation is tradition and reason will always be subject to the authority of scripture as the primary means by which God communicates with mankind. Visually, the triangle of this interpretation is very tall and thin. It would appear that both of these understandings are considered by chaplains in relation to how same-sex issues affect their ministry.

a chapel service could legitimise ... [the] mistreatment of homosexual prisoners'<sup>194</sup> In this case, the facts as reported indicate that the courts may have deemed that 'reason' is given a higher weighting than 'scripture' in this particular chaplaincy scenario. It is not inconceivable that a similar ruling may apply to other chaplains, whether employed by public bodies or not. It may be for this reason that chaplains have a legitimate concern that same-sex issues could possibly be an obstacle to their ministry. The position that they take on the issue is, arguably, irrelevant. The fact that the same-sex agenda has such a high profile in the media, in church debate and in everyday culture, makes it a subject that is inextricably linked to chaplains and their ministry. Whilst one respondent observes, 'I think it is no secret that the URC General Assembly's decision to give churches the right (but not the obligation) to host same-sex marriages raises tricky questions. This would clearly be exacerbated if one of the URC congregations within the county were to choose to pursue this'.<sup>195</sup> Another identifies precisely where they believe the tension will arise ('The acceptance of same-sex marriages by URC will be tricky for C of E evangelicals to avoid'<sup>196</sup>). It would appear that since there is little prospect of the Mission Community partner denominations (or even the wider church) coming to consensus of opinion in the near future, chaplains may have to retain their own chosen method of relating to those in their sphere, with both sensitivity and integrity, within the confines of the boundaries set by their own denominational allegiance.

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<sup>194</sup> "Pentecostal minister loses appeal over quoting Bible", *Church of England Newspaper* (11 August 2017), 3.

<sup>195</sup> Respondent 49487537.

<sup>196</sup> Respondent 49483327.

Since July 2016 the URC has permitted the celebration and registration of marriages of same-sex couples in its churches. It is not a position that was easily reached. The General Assembly had previously considered the proposal twice before (in 2014 and 2015). Acknowledging that the denomination cannot express a single view on the issue, it was ratified as policy in 2016 that each URC congregation will be responsible for its own decision on whether or not to host a same-sex marriage in the local church. This ruling was not without dissent in the URC, prompting its General Secretary, Reverend John Proctor, to state, 'Today the URC has made an important decision – at which some will rejoice and with which others will be uncomfortable'.<sup>197</sup> The impact of the ruling on chaplains exercising a ministry within ecumenical Mission Communities is that it suggests to some potential service users an overall sense of inclusivity, impacting positively on chaplaincy as a whole. However, a negative impact may be that it might sharpen divisions between chaplains who exercise a ministry within the same Mission Community, but who do not share the same theological position as the URC.

The Church of England has traditionally taken a different view from the URC and has expressed this in the form of a statement released in 2013, upholding, 'as a matter of doctrine and in accordance with the teaching of

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<sup>197</sup> United Reformed Church, "The URC empowers its local churches to conduct marriages of same-sex couples", 2016, [cited 1 June 2017]. Online: [www.urc.org.uk/media-news/2084-the-united-reformed-church-votes-to-allow-the-marriage-of-same-sex-couples-in-its-churches.html#sthash.vk8CSBv2.dpuf](http://www.urc.org.uk/media-news/2084-the-united-reformed-church-votes-to-allow-the-marriage-of-same-sex-couples-in-its-churches.html#sthash.vk8CSBv2.dpuf)

Christ, that marriage is a union between one man with one woman'.<sup>198</sup> Whilst this indicated a clear position at that time, in 2017 the Anglican Synod subsequently met to vote on a 'Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage Report', which called for a culture of welcome and support for gay Christians, at the same time upholding the Church of England's traditional position: that marriage in church should only be between a man and a woman and services should not be held to bless same-sex relationships. After a lengthy debate, the motion was defeated. The House of Bishops voted 43 to 1 (the 'one' subsequently stating that they had made a mistake in process and had fully intended to vote in line with all the other bishops). The House of Laity also backed the report to maintain traditional teaching, by 106 to 83. However, to win approval the report had to win backing in all three houses, and the House of Clergy rejected it by 100 votes to 93, with two abstentions. The ambiguity and mixed representations of bishops, laity and clergy suggest that there is theological disharmony in the Church of England on this issue. The impact of this on Mission Community chaplains (of all partner denominations) is to create suspicion amongst them as to whether one's own chaplaincy team is committed to serving the Church with a common understanding.

On the same issue, The Methodist Conference of 2014 agreed that it would not seek authority to conduct same-sex marriages, but that individual

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<sup>198</sup> Church of England, "Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Bill: Commons Second Reading Briefing from the Church of England", 2013, [cited 2 June 2017]. Online: [www.churchofengland.org/media/1657614/ssmarriagebillbriefing.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1657614/ssmarriagebillbriefing.pdf)

ministers would be free to continue to offer blessings of same-sex civil partnerships, extended to same-sex marriages. Whilst Conference was unwilling to change its current teaching and definition on marriage, it did conclude with the formation of a 'Marriage and Relations' task group to review the question of whether or not the 1992 statement on 'A Christian Understanding of Family Life, the Single Person and Marriage' should be updated; and whether to revisit the question of embarking upon a process of revising the Methodist Church's definition of marriage. The task group reported back to Conference in 2016 and recommended that a new task group should report to the 2018 Conference with a draft statement(s).<sup>199</sup> Even so, the task group were unable to bring before the Conference a draft text for a new definition of marriage, for a number of practical and theological reasons. It is now the intention of the task group to revise their process and timetable with a view to bringing a new statement to the 2020 Conference 'with the possibility of including same-sex, as well as heterosexual marriage'.<sup>200</sup>

The Salvation Army, whilst emphasising inclusivity towards those in need, holds to its robust 'Marriage Positional Statement' of 2011, that 'God ordained marriage to be an exclusive and lifelong relationship between one man and one woman which is characterised by mutual submission, respect,

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<sup>199</sup> Methodist Church, "Marriage and Relations Task Group", 2016, [cited 3 June 2017].  
Online:  
[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2016-29-Marriage-and-Relationships-Task-Group.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2016-29-Marriage-and-Relationships-Task-Group.pdf)

<sup>200</sup> Methodist Church, "Marriage and Relations Task Group", 2018, [cited 20 July 2018].  
Online:  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/8031/conf-2018-27-marriage-and-relationships-250518.pdf>



self-giving love, faithfulness and openness to each other. It is a holy relationship, sanctioned and blessed by Christ'.<sup>201</sup> In terms of impact on Mission Communities, a declaration of inclusivity, as expressed in the statement (alongside one of perceived rejection of the current secular marriage laws) might add to a sense of confusion. However, as with the other partner denominations, the reality of unconditionally being alongside those in need does not clash with a theology that emanates from tradition and scripture.

In conclusion, no chaplain appears to have indicated that the same-sex issue will result in them changing their working practice, with either colleagues or service users. Nevertheless, in the light of the ongoing debate, some might well adjust their theological position in order to widen their scope of ministry. Further, some chaplains' relationships with secular host organisations (e.g. Prison Service) may be affected by the need to comply with the 2010 Equalities Act. The unfolding situation for chaplains might have a negative impact if any part of the Church is seen to be moving away from the values that are currently acceptable to secular society. This is further complicated when chaplains take the Biblical/traditional view of same-sex relations, whilst others emphasise a more incarnational/ministry-of-presence view. In summary, my interpretation of the data is that the Church is moving in the opposite direction to the norms of secular society: this because

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<sup>201</sup> Salvation Army, "Marriage Positional Statement", 2011, [cited 5 June 2017]. Online [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/files/marriagepdf/download?token=b7H44F3F](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/files/marriagepdf/download?token=b7H44F3F)

chaplains are overwhelmingly emphasising that their ministry takes place in a world where the Church (and the authority of scripture) is less relevant.

However, the greatest impact of this issue on Mission Communities might be that acknowledgement of the diversity of opinion will, if carried out with care and sensitivity, allow and encourage chaplains to minister to all sections of the community, without allowing theological doctrine to usurp pastoral responsibility.

## 9. DISCONNECTING THEME 3 – SACRAMENTS

This chapter begins by identifying what chaplains mean when referring to the sacraments. It details which sacraments are being included, as well as a comparison of denominations' theological understanding of real and spiritual presence in the eucharist. This is followed by a comparison of actual practice between the denominations, since this appears to be the main impact on chaplains. As a balance to this view, compelling evidence is presented from three outside commentators (McGowan, Bradshaw and O'Dea) to suggest that there has never been a consistent form of how the eucharist is carried out. Following this, the question of lay presidency is considered, with a comparison of each denominational interpretation. The chapter concludes with the view that the issue of diversity of sacramental practice was overstated (for reasons which are unclear) by a small number of respondents and questioning whether there will, in fact, be any discernible impact at all.

### *9.1 Sacraments – Establishing the Weight of the Collective View*

Reformed and Anglican Churches understand sacraments to consist of baptism and the eucharist. Yet, when respondents spoke of the sacraments, they invariably referred only to communion, or the eucharist. Although all the partner denominations share the view that baptism and eucharist are the only sacraments they recognise, there is a significant difference in broader understanding of the eucharist, and how it is applied within the context of Mission Communities. Even within Anglicanism, there is a diversity of

understanding across the international communion; as well as between United Kingdom Anglo-Catholics and evangelicals regarding the eucharist.

Within the broad church of Anglicanism, the understanding of eucharistic theology ranges from 'real presence' to 'spiritual presence.' Those who adhere to the understanding of spiritual presence believe that when a communicant receives the elements of bread and wine there is a pneumatic, rather than real, presence of Christ. This view is held by low church or evangelical Anglicans. High-Church Anglicans, or Anglo-Catholics, believe that, through a mystery of faith, Christ becomes substantially present in the elements, rather than merely spiritually or symbolically. Whilst both of these understandings are acceptable to Anglicans, there was a notable comment from one (Anglican) respondent who declared that ecumenical Mission Communities were not possible, simply because the other partner denominations could not accept the real presence of Christ at the altar.<sup>202</sup> As a point of fact, the respondent appears to have been mistaken regarding the Methodist and URC positions.

The 2003 Methodist Conference report states that, 'Methodism inherited from John and Charles Wesley a devout appreciation of Holy Communion as a divinely appointed means of grace. The undefined but real

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<sup>202</sup> Respondent A1@b33.

presence of Christ was proclaimed ...'<sup>203</sup> Despite the respondent's misunderstanding, the impact of Mission Communities on their ministry was to create a perceived schism, which made working alongside certain other chaplains 'not possible'. The implications of this train of thought is that Mission Communities will not work (for chaplains) if everyone is not of the same doctrinal position.

Whilst the URC makes the following statement regarding the Lord's Supper and Christ's presence, it does need some further explanation:

The United Reformed Church celebrates the gospel sacrament of the Lord's Supper. When in obedience to the Lord's command his people show forth his sacrifice on the cross by the bread broken and the wine outpoured for them to eat and drink, he himself, risen and ascended, is present and gives himself to them for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. United with him and with the whole Church on earth and in heaven, his people gathered at his table present their sacrifice of thanksgiving and renew the offering of themselves, and rejoice in the promise of his coming in glory.<sup>204</sup>

When the instruction refers to 'he himself ... is present', the URC aligns itself with the Reformed and Presbyterian view that this presence does not amount to a real bodily presence in the bread and wine. One ordained URC respondent told me, 'Belief or non-belief in any view of 'presence' is not a necessity for salvation. It is better if we let individual Christians decide for

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<sup>203</sup> Methodist Conference 2003 Report, "Holy Communion in the Methodist Church", 2003, [cited 9 June 2017]. Online: [www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-holy-communion-in-methodist-church-2003.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-holy-communion-in-methodist-church-2003.pdf)

The report then went further on to expand: 'In terms of the congregation's appropriation of the reality of Christ's presence, the anamnesis (memorial, remembrance, representation) means that past present and future coincide in the sacramental event. All that Jesus Christ means in his person and redemption is brought forth from history to our present experience that is also a foretaste of the future fulfilment of God's unobstructed reign. And this presence is made a reality for us by the working of God's Spirit, whom we call down by invocation (epiclesis), both upon the gifts and upon the people'.

<sup>204</sup> United Reformed Church, 'The Manual', 2012, [cited 9 June 2017]. Online: [www.urc.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/ministries/docs/URC\\_Manual\\_-\\_section\\_A\\_-\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.urc.org.uk/what_we_do/ministries/docs/URC_Manual_-_section_A_-_pdf.pdf)

themselves how Jesus is present at the communion table, without us prescribing exactly how'.<sup>205</sup> For this particular respondent it seems better that individuals impact the Mission Community positively, rather than let it impact them negatively.

The Salvation Army, whilst not observing any sacraments, do take a view. They agree with the other denominations that receiving a sacrament is an act of grace, and therefore do not criticise their use by others. However, the Salvation Army believe that it is possible to receive the grace of God without engaging in an outward and physical symbolic act – nor are sacraments a necessary part of becoming a Christian.<sup>206</sup> The impact of this stance on Mission Community chaplains is that it gives the freedom to allow and encourage fellow chaplains to celebrate their ministry in a way that is appropriate to them, without a perceived sense that they are doing something doctrinally suspect in the eyes of their Salvationist colleagues.

Whilst gathering the weight of what might be a majority view through the lens of each partner denomination, one respondent sought to summarise by suggesting that the difference was simply between Roman Catholic and Reformed traditions and that, inevitably, 'We get tied up in knots ...'<sup>207</sup> Whilst it may be simplistic to understand the issue as a Protestant/Roman Catholic issue, the differences do indeed impact upon Mission Communities because, whilst not a partner denomination, the Roman Catholic Church in Cumbria

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<sup>205</sup> Respondent U1@e38.

<sup>206</sup> Waterbeach and Soham Salvation Army Community Church, "Why does the Salvation Army not Baptise or Hold Communion?", 2017, [9 June 2017]. Online: [www.waterbeachsalvationarmy.org.uk/what-to-know-more/why-does-the-salvation-army-not-baptise-or-hold-communion/](http://www.waterbeachsalvationarmy.org.uk/what-to-know-more/why-does-the-salvation-army-not-baptise-or-hold-communion/)

<sup>207</sup> Respondent 50803069.

are signatories to a 'Letter of Companionship' which affirms their commitment to pray for those churches who have joined together as Mission Community partners and to work with them at local and county level, where possible. For this reason, the doctrinal difference between Roman Catholic and Reformed Church chaplains does have an impact upon chaplaincy models.

Roman Catholics take the view that the definition of a sacrament is 'an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace', and that there are seven in total, namely: baptism, eucharist, confirmation, reconciliation, anointing of the sick, marriage and holy orders.<sup>208</sup> Churches from a Reformed tradition accept that confirmation, reconciliation, anointing of the sick, marriage and holy orders are valid examples from the New Testament, but hold that they do not fulfil a criterion that requires there to be both a command and a visible sign that is certain and consistent. This, therefore, leaves the majority view amongst chaplains in Cumbria to be that, apart from High-Church Anglicans, the Reformed position is the generally accepted one. Still, no chaplain raised the number or definition of sacraments as an issue, or indeed that they had any problems working alongside Roman Catholic chaplains.

Collectively then, evidenced by comments from questionnaires and interviews, there is a significant core of chaplains within Mission Communities who appear to hold the view that the celebration of holy communion is an obstacle because of the diversity of practice. The weight of opinion appears to be that the divide in eucharistic practice is so wide that it is impossible to reconcile, and therefore will always be the most significant

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<sup>208</sup> Beginning Catholic, "Catholic Sacraments", [cited 7 September 2017]. Online: [www.beginningcatholic.com/sacraments](http://www.beginningcatholic.com/sacraments)

barrier to progress, even amongst the Reformed traditions because, 'We understand the sacraments differently'.<sup>209</sup> Whilst the differences in theology have been highlighted, the greater contrast is arguably between actual practice. The apparent majority view of respondents suggests that the impact of this is a barrier to their work and ministry. There is, however, a counter-argument, that this diversity of practice actually enhances the overall quality of chaplaincy provision within Cumbrian Mission Community chaplaincy teams.

## *9.2 Sacraments – Presenting Alternatives to the Collective View*

This subheading offers a contrasting opinion to those chaplains who are uncomfortable with the diversity and inconsistency of eucharistic practice. It is drawn from three theologians outside of Cumbrian chaplaincy.

Andrew McGowan argues that the origins of the eucharistic tradition have been intentionally skewed to support a theory that modern day communion is either a 'smooth transition, or a radical fall from primitive ideals'.<sup>210</sup> Further, McGowan provides evidence that early eucharistic practice acknowledged Graeco-Roman meal conventions, and that in this there was considerable diversity of form.<sup>211</sup> If he is correct that there was no common template for the celebration of the eucharist, then this becomes a counter-view to those chaplains who assert that the impact of Mission

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<sup>209</sup> Respondent 51406896.

<sup>210</sup> Andrew McGowan, "Rethinking Eucharistic Origins", *Pacifica* 23 (2010): 173-191.

<sup>211</sup> McGowan, "Eucharistic Origins", 173.



Communities is divisive because denominations do not share the same practice, rites and rituals in carrying out the celebration. This is because the evolution of the eucharist can be traced on a number of fronts to show that there is no single line of consistency to which one must adhere in order to demonstrate orthodoxy. The first comes from identifying the beginning.

It may not be possible to reliably establish exactly when or what triggered the disciples to begin celebrating a meal in remembrance of Jesus. However, from within the post-Pentecost immediate narrative Luke writes, 'They met constantly to hear the Apostles teach, and to share the common life, to break bread, and to pray'. (Acts 2:42, NEB). The synoptic gospels, as well as Paul in 1 Corinthians, give an account of the institution of the eucharist at the Last Supper. These accounts were written between twenty-five and sixty years after the event, so the detail of the original would be influenced by how it was passed on to them. It is reasonable to assume that the tradition of orally passing on would necessarily involve some fluidity. It is for this reason that Bradshaw observes,

One of the major difficulties faced by scholars with regard to the origin of the Eucharist is the question of how far the accounts of the Last Supper may be treated as reliable descriptions of an actual historical event and how far they have been affected by the later liturgical practices of the first generation of Christians.<sup>212</sup>

The observations of both Bradshaw and McGowan correctly challenge the view of those respondents who believe that the impact of the introduction of Mission Communities is hampered, chiefly because the partner denominations do not all acknowledge the same set process for the

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<sup>212</sup> Paul F Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 61.

celebration of a communion meal. The contributions of McGowan and Bradshaw indicate that there may have never been such conformity: there has been an evolution of practice which, it might be argued, continues to this day. Further challenge to the 'common practice' view is found in O'Dea's assertion that not only are there differences in the areas of eucharistic meal and evolution of different rites, but also in the institution narrative.<sup>213</sup>

One chaplain respondent spoke of the value of sharing a meal at the same time as the eucharist.<sup>214</sup> Whilst no generalisation can be applied to how the eucharistic ritual was performed, and indeed each community probably celebrated differently, it is known that, at least in Corinth, they met to eat together at the same time as engaging in the Lord's Supper, 'You meet as a congregation, it is impossible for you to eat the Lord's Supper, because each of you is in such a hurry to eat his own, and whilst one goes hungry another has too much to drink' (1 Cor 11:20-21, NEB). The practice of sharing a meal at the eucharist is not common now in parochial church terms, and only one respondent has referred to it in interview. Nonetheless, these points do give weight to the argument that diversity of eucharistic rite is the order of the day, not commonality of practice. Indeed, O'Dea observes, 'In the East, many different rites evolved, and these are still in use: such as the Coptic, East

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<sup>213</sup> Frank O'Dea, "Eucharist: The Basic Spirituality with 30 Stories of Personal Witness", 2010, [cited 7 September 2017]. Online: [www.theeucharistic.wordpress.com/index.chapter-1/](http://www.theeucharistic.wordpress.com/index.chapter-1/)

<sup>214</sup> Respondent O1\*d61.

Syrian, West Syrian, Byzantine and Malabar rites. Several different rites evolved in the West.<sup>215</sup>

### *9.3 Sacraments – Impact of Sacraments on Chaplains*

This subheading asserts that chaplains' uncertainties about holy communion are borne out of insecurity. It suggests that an outworking of those fears is the wider implementation of lay presidency, and concludes that the overall impact may be minimal.

The desire expressed by some respondents for a universal form of eucharistic practice may be borne out of insecurity. Some chaplains did articulate that their position within the establishment was insecure, especially those with a ministry in publicly funded organisations. The need to be seen to be 'on board' with the business mission, and the ever-growing scrutiny of the place of faith in secular environs – all put pressure on chaplains to both conform and be seen as acceptably different. Being acceptably different is reinforced when a chaplain can hypothetically argue that, 'We are all of one mind – we all do it like this'. To some, this might be a way of indicating to

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<sup>215</sup> O'Dea, "Eucharist".

One respondent (A2@i52) indicated that prayer and the institution narrative was too restricted when applied to some chaplaincy contexts. However, O'Dea points out, 'We take for granted that in every Eucharist we hear the story of the Last Supper which contains the words of Jesus, "Take and eat, this is my body given up for you.... Take and drink, this is my blood poured out for you". We refer to these as the "Words of Consecration" ... These words were considered absolutely essential. However, research shows that the earliest Eucharistic prayers did not contain the story of the Last Supper, hence they did not contain what we call the "Words of Consecration". So there is not a single pre-Nicene eucharistic prayer that one can prove contained the Words of Institution.' Indeed, in Justin Martyr's document of AD 155, a rite is recorded in which 'The President offers prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability'. This, according to O'Dea, is, 'referring to the Eucharistic prayer which the presider composed spontaneously'.

managers, 'You can trust us: we are a "branded package" and will not inadvertently bring (religious) conflict into the workplace'. However, Other insecurities lie in the tension between ordained clergy (authorised to preside at communion) and lay Christians, (who may not, unless the practice of lay presidency becomes universally accepted).

The question of lay presidency may well be a powerful subtext behind the questionnaire responses and subsequent interviews. There may be a fear that if lay presidency gains a theological hold with any of the partner denominations, then the threat to ordained ministers is increased. The respondents who argue that the sacraments may be an obstacle all happened to be ordained clergy.

When Mission Community church congregations allow those from other partner denominations to lead and preach in their own church, there is a tension between upholding and honouring the traditions of that particular church, and respecting the minister who has come to enable worship. The tension arises when, say, a Methodist or URC minister leads a service in an Anglican Church, in keeping with the current Mission Community arrangements. Do they preside at communion, or is their ordination not recognised by the Anglican Church? These were questions arising from one respondent who readily identified with the Methodist view arising from the 1984 Methodist Conference.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Respondent M1@i75.

The Methodist position is contained in an agenda item (Lay Presidency at the Lord's Supper) at the 1984 Methodist Conference.<sup>217</sup> Essentially, 'Suitable lay people' are recognised as representing and leading the Church in every respect. However, the criteria for granting authority should understand that, 'There is no suggestion that circuits or districts should be allowed to decide the matter themselves'.<sup>218</sup>

The URC fully accept lay ministry at the Lord's Supper for those whom it authorises. Guidelines are set out in the URC Manual under 'Presidents at the Sacraments: 7.3 Lay Presidents'.<sup>219</sup>

Whilst lay presidency in the URC and Methodist Churches is not an issue, for the Anglican Church there is much less common ground and, for this reason, chaplains correctly identify it as a potential obstacle to their

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<sup>217</sup> Methodist Church, "Lay Presidency at the Lord's Supper". [cited 15 September 2017]. Online: [www.methodist.org.uk/media/2620592/FO-statement-Lay-Presidency-at-the-Lords-Supper-1984.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2620592/FO-statement-Lay-Presidency-at-the-Lords-Supper-1984.pdf)

<sup>218</sup> Methodist Church, "Lay Presidency". The document expands and clarifies the position by saying that the following rationale must also be taken into consideration: '1. The celebration of Holy Communion relates closely to the pastoral and missionary aspects of the Church's life. This means that the question of who presides is more than a technicality; it is a matter of the proper expression of the whole life of the congregation. 2. The presence of an ordained minister from another part of the Circuit almost inevitably means the absence of the lay person in pastoral charge. So the link between celebration and pastoral care is lost. 3. Where lay and ordained share together in full-time ministry in a circuit, it is important to demonstrate that the ministry of the lay assistant is not regarded as second best. 4. The Methodist Church is not opposed in principle to the presidency of lay people at Holy Communion. The restriction is a matter of order, and order ought not to be allowed to impoverish worship or inhibit mission'. The conclusion of this argument is that the criteria for the giving of authorisations should be modified so that a lay person with particular pastoral and missionary responsibility in a local Church should always have authorisation if it is requested.

<sup>219</sup> United Reformed Church, "Presidency at the Sacraments". [cited 19 September 2017]. Online: [www.urc.org.uk/images/the\\_manual/F.%20Guidance%20on%20presidency.pdf](http://www.urc.org.uk/images/the_manual/F.%20Guidance%20on%20presidency.pdf) 'The good character and standing must be the first consideration of the District in seeking lay presidents. It is also of cardinal importance that they know what they are doing. There seems to be no reason why a District should not authorise someone to preside at the Lord's Supper ... it is not good enough simply to say the words and go through the motions like an actor. The president should have a sound understanding of what is happening and believe in it to command respect. He or she should be able to talk with anyone about membership of the body of Christ ... Districts should see that all those it appoints to preside have a spiritual awareness of the importance of the role and a good grasp of its responsibilities'.

ministry within Mission Communities. The current position within the Church of England (though not the whole Anglican Communion) is that the person who presides at the eucharist must be an ordained priest. This is confirmed in the House of Bishops report 'Eucharistic Presidency: A Theological Statement by the House of Bishops of the General Synod'.<sup>220</sup> It takes issue with the URC and Methodists on the question of authorisation, preferring to take the view that canonicity and pastoral oversight outweigh the benefits of recognising and authorising a lay person for a particular role in a particular community for the purpose of administering holy communion.<sup>221</sup>

The Free Churches riposte to the bishops' statement could be that, because the Anglican Church allows lay people (Lay Readers) to preach without going through the same procedure as for presiding at the eucharist, this then elevates sacrament above word; a questionable theology, they might argue. Despite this, the House of Bishops urge caution in drawing such parallels:

We need to be careful in drawing parallels too hastily between the ministry of word and sacrament. It needs to be recalled that teaching authority properly belongs to the ordained priest/presbyter as part of his/her ordination to the ministry of word and sacrament. This may be delegated to a lay preacher who has received appropriate preparation and training, but responsibility for or oversight of the proclamation of the Gospel still belongs to the ordained minister of the congregation.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> House of Bishops, *Eucharistic Presidency: A Theological Statement by the House of Bishops of the General Synod* (London: Church House, 1997).

<sup>221</sup> House of Bishops, *Eucharistic Presidency*, 58.

To this end, the House of Bishops statement in defence of ordained-only presidency rests on, 'Authorisation is a juridical act; ordination is first and foremost a liturgical act (although it includes juridical elements). Eucharistic presidency is an event in the life of the church which proceeds out of community oversight. The proper way to "authorise" leaders of communities who will thus preside at the Eucharist is through the laying on of hands and prayer, i.e. through a liturgical event in the life of the church rather than an administrative procedure'.

<sup>222</sup> House of Bishops, *Eucharistic Presidency*, 56.

This statement brings the Church of England to an impasse with the URC and Methodist Churches because, legally, the Church of England cannot introduce lay presidency. However, the legal standings have already been set aside, in that the concept of Mission Communities (as expressed in the Cumbrian model), has no legal foundation. Cumbria, therefore accepts that it is acting in very much a pioneering role. In addition, a leading senior Anglican involved in shaping Mission Communities takes the view that if, say, a Methodist presided in an Anglican Church, they would be allowed to offer a service of holy communion, provided that it is clearly a Methodist rite and does not use one of the Anglican rites. If though, a Methodist lay person (authorised to preside at a Methodist holy communion) is leading the service in an Anglican Church, then they are not allowed to preside at the Anglican Communion, even if they use a Methodist rite.<sup>223</sup>

The strong, sometimes emotional responses raised by respondents, appear to lie very much in the fear that the sacramental practices of their own denominations will be under threat to conform to the practice of another denomination. When probed, none of the respondents identified how eucharistic and sacramental difference of praxis and theology would affect their chaplaincy ministry on a day-to-day basis. All said that they would continue using the model that they have always used within their particular field – most of which conformed to the requirements of their denomination. The only exception to this was articulated by one chaplain who used a, ‘Home-made, area specific, form of delivering communion’.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Respondent A1 @i80.

<sup>224</sup> Respondent M1 @a4.

Overall, those who have expressed a strong opinion are Anglican and, upon further investigation, Anglicans who are not sole chaplains; they have another (usually parish) ministry alongside a part-time chaplain role. During interview, those who believed that the eucharist is problematic appeared to be directing their comments towards the difficulties of ecumenical practice in a parish setting, rather than a chaplaincy environment. When probed further, the most vocal respondents appeared to be giving vent to their opposition to Mission Communities in general. When brought back to focusing on chaplaincy, all acknowledged that a large percentage of chaplaincy ministry did not include presidency over communion and that, in fact, it was a small issue when placed alongside the question of how Mission Communities impact on chaplains. Furthermore, even where chaplain practitioners were presiding over multi-denominational eucharistic services, they accepted that all the partner denominations (with the exception of the Salvation Army) receive at the communion table/altar all those who are baptised and in good standing with their own denomination. The issues of detail concerning vestments, non-alcoholic wine, the role of the priest/presbyter, the transformational nature of the elements, direction of facing of the president or whether the central piece of furniture is a table or an altar, are largely irrelevant to most respondents. More important to many is the acceptance of their calling (lay or ordained) in the eyes of the wider church and other chaplains.

In summary, for those chaplains who have expressed difficulty in working ecumenically because of the inconsistency of eucharistic practice,



the greatest impact might be the effect on the relationship between themselves and their denominational partners. Whilst they may not be called upon to change their working practice in this area, they might be impacted by a need to revisit their traditional theological position concerning the sacraments, particularly in the light of Bradshaw, McGowan and O'Dea's conclusion that there never has been a single rite, accepted and adopted by all. In terms of overall impact upon chaplains and chaplaincy models, it may be that the issue of diversity of sacramental practice was overstated by a small number of respondents – and these would appear to be mainly ordained Anglicans who fear that lay presidency will erode their status and position. Despite this, chaplains are free to continue within the traditions of their own denomination. Therefore, one might not discern any real impact at all.

## 10. DISCONNECTING THEME 4 – ROLE OF WOMEN IN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

This chapter begins by acknowledging that the place of women in Christian leadership is still an ongoing debate in Cumbria. This is demonstrated by including the unedited notes collected after a discussion throughout all the Anglican Carlisle Deanery Synods concerning the ordination of women to the episcopacy. Whilst these notes appear to show a trend towards acceptance of women in Christian leadership, it is balanced with the complementarian position - which has a strong hold in the conservative evangelical churches in the north and west of Cumbria. The chapter concludes with a review of each of the denomination's position on the subject of women in Christian leadership, and an analysis of precisely how the issue might have an impact on chaplains.

### *10.1 Role of Women in Christian Leadership - Establishing the Weight of the Collective View*

Whilst the place of women in leadership is not an issue for Salvation Army, URC and Methodist Churches; and is rapidly becoming a diminishing cause of controversy in the Anglican Church, some respondents still view the impact of the debate as a potential obstruction to their chaplaincy ministry.

In 2011, all of the Anglican Carlisle Deanery Synods discussed the ordination of women to the episcopacy, with the main comments then being

reported to the Diocesan Synod.<sup>225</sup> They are reproduced here (unedited) in the main body of this study because they give a snapshot of that which was being debated by those lay and clergy personnel who live within the Mission Community geographical area. One respondent suggested that all the arguments ‘against’ came from a particular area of Cumbria, thus skewing the published results.<sup>226</sup> When interviewed, the respondent felt that a disproportionate number of conservative evangelicals were concentrated in that particular area of the county (Carlisle).

	Arguments against	Arguments in favour
1	Jesus’ disciples were all men – no women. Therefore, we should not have women priests or Bishops	Jesus had lots of women disciples.  Mary Magdalene was the first witness to the resurrection.  ‘Apostle’ means sent – especially ‘sent as a witness to the resurrection’. Therefore, Mary was the first apostle.

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<sup>225</sup> Diocese of Carlisle, “The Ordination of Women as Priests and Bishops”. [cited 19 September 2017]. Online: [www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/731/The\\_ordination\\_of\\_women\\_as\\_priests\\_and\\_Bishops.pdf.html](http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk/uploads/731/The_ordination_of_women_as_priests_and_Bishops.pdf.html)

<sup>226</sup> Respondent 50663178. ‘Probably the only [obstacle] ... in Carlisle ... would be the role of women in leadership’.

2	<p>The ordained ministry of the Church has not changed in 2,000 years: there have never been women priests and Bishops and we should not start now.</p> <p>We can change things, but if we do, we can never be certain about our innovations. On the other hand, we can rely on the traditions of the church – those things which have always been done and believed, by all Christians, everywhere.</p> <p>And so, if the change proposed is a big one, we should be all the more cautious.</p>	<p>In the first two or three centuries of Christianity, things were very fluid and what we now take as tradition (bishops, priests and deacons) was not so then, with lots of other types of ministry, and different churches having different sorts of clergy.</p> <p>Those changes have not stopped;</p> <p>So, for example St Hilda, Abbess of Whitby in the 600s, was certainly in charge of a monastery of both men and women; she may have worn a mitre and may have ordained at least deacons.</p> <p>At the end of the middle ages, lots of types of minor clergy roles were abolished.</p> <p>More recently we have introduced Readers (in truth reintroduced!).</p> <p>And more recently still, things like Commissioned Lay Ministers.</p>
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3	<p>This is such a big change – it is not something which should be done by one small branch of the church (i.e. us) on its own.</p> <p>In the past, the church has made many great changes – but always these have been done by the whole church called to a General Council (e.g. the Councils that agreed the Creeds, which of course are not in the Bible but were written and agreed up to four hundred years after Jesus).</p>	<p>If we wait for all the other churches to agree, we will wait for ever.</p> <p>Lots of other churches – including some in the Anglican Communion – have already ‘gone it alone’ – so whatever we do, we cannot follow the ‘whole church’. The church has always been divided about many things, including this, and many other things as well – we just have to live with these divisions.</p>
4	<p>It is not fair on those who have given their lives to the Church and now find the Church has changed and moved away from them.</p>	<p>If we accept this argument, we’ll never be able to change anything – but really God has entrusted His Church into our hands and we have to get on with its work – which includes needing changes, some welcome, some not.</p>

5	<p>We are working hard at drawing closer to other churches— we shouldn't do something that upsets our improving relationships with the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.</p>	<p>There are people in the Roman Catholic church who are arguing for the ordination of Catholic women as priests. Effectively then, this would bring us closer to them, even if we upset the hierarchy.</p> <p>In any case, neither the Catholics (officially – though some individuals take a different view) nor the Orthodox really accept our ordination or any of our sacraments, so is there any real relationship to destroy?</p>
6	<p>The Bible uses male imagery of God as Father, Jesus as Son – so it gives male a distinctive role.</p> <p>Priest and bishop represent Jesus at the altar – Jesus was male and so must they be.</p>	<p>The Bible often talks about God as 'we' and sometimes uses female imagery – e.g. God's wisdom is usually 'she'.</p> <p>Jesus sacrifices Himself for all humanity and so all humanity is represented at the altar – and so the priest and bishop can be male or female.</p>

7	<p>The Bible talks about headship: the bishop is the head of the diocese, the priest is head of the congregation, and the father the head of the family, as Jesus is the head of the church, and God is the Father of us all.</p> <p>The Bible goes on to say that headship should be exercised by men; this is why St Paul says that women should not address the congregation.</p>	<p>St Paul's writings about the way in which families and congregations should be organised were a response to the culture in which the early Church operated. St Paul did not want to give any cause for scandal to the non-Christians – and so he took a very cautious stance on women.</p> <p>St Paul also says that in Christ there is no male or female, slave or free – so, He is clear that the differences between human beings are less important than the overwhelming fact of baptism into Christ.</p>
8	<p>We made all these changes twenty years ago, but women priests haven't made any difference – they haven't done any good.</p>	<p>On the contrary, many (not all) of our women clergy are excellent, and of course some of them are loads better than many of the men.</p>
9	<p>Male and female are complementary – insisting on male priests and bishops is not to suggest that men are better or more important. Having female priests and bishops dilutes those complementary gifts and merges everyone into everyone else: we should allow this distinction to stand.</p>	<p>It is a matter of simple justice. In the past the church has got things wrong – e.g. it didn't say anything about slavery for about 1,400 years (AD 400–AD 1,800). We need to learn from that and treat all people fairly and equally.</p>

10	<p>Having women bishops is fundamentally different from having women priests.</p> <p>Since those who are against women bishops do not believe they are in accord with God's will, women bishops are not proper bishops; therefore, they cannot delegate the power of a bishop to a male bishop who would be in accord with God's will and acceptable to this group. Instead, there would need to be some other way in which an acceptable male bishop could have a bishop's authority (rather than receiving this authority at the hands of women who, in truth, don't have the authority in the first place).</p> <p>In addition, since women bishops, not being acceptable bishops, would not be able properly to ordain anyone: one would need to check all male priests and bishops to make sure that they had not been ordained by a woman; or by anyone who had been ordained by a woman, and so on back into the past.</p>	<p>The Church of England has already decided, as have many other parts of the Anglican Communion, that there is no theological reason why women cannot be Bishops.</p> <p>If those opposed to women bishops were allowed to 'sidestep' the authority of a woman bishop by having some separately appointed male bishop, then women bishops would in fact be second-class bishops, with less authority than male bishops.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Church of England – of the 43 Dioceses, and of the bishops and of the clergy, and of the laity – are in favour of this move.</p> <p>Not going ahead with this move weakens our standing in the world. How can we talk about fairness and justice and God's grace when we perpetuate this discrimination?</p>
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Whilst the relevance of this document has its roots in Cumbria, and reflects opinions at that point in time, one respondent who was in attendance commented that the quality of debate was quite shallow, observing that 'anecdote appeared to carry greater weight than theology'.<sup>227</sup> Nevertheless, the overwhelming consensus of opinion amongst chaplains interviewed was that, if the Church of England persisted in publicly wrestling with, and challenging, the notion of women in ministry, then the Church as a whole (not only Anglicans) would be perceived as accepting inequality of gender, and that this could be an obstruction to chaplaincy across the county and beyond.

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<sup>227</sup> Respondent A1@i81.

## *10.2 Role of Women in Christian Leadership – Presenting Alternatives to the Collective View*

The opposing view to women in Christian leadership, though an apparent minority in Cumbria, holds that the sexes have complementary roles. One respondent said that they understood the complementarian position.<sup>228</sup> Their view was that Biblical complementarianism identifies separate roles for men and women, but that this in no way compromises equality, since the roles themselves are not hierarchical. The respondent echoes and summarises Piper's view as, 'Ontologically Equal – Functionally Different'.<sup>229</sup> This was the only respondent to articulate emphatically on the issue. The complementarian contribution to the debate appears to be that the whole Church is strengthened when gender roles have meaningful distinctions which do not imply a sense of rank or hierarchy. Whilst this is a valid position to hold, if its final expression is a prohibition of women in Christian leadership roles, then it will attract criticism from the (many) chaplains who hold to a high view of egalitarianism.

## *10.3 Role of Women in Christian Leadership – Impact of Women in Christian Leadership on Chaplains*

This subheading begins with an illustration of the imbalance towards males in a broad range of chaplaincy models. It goes on to map-out how each

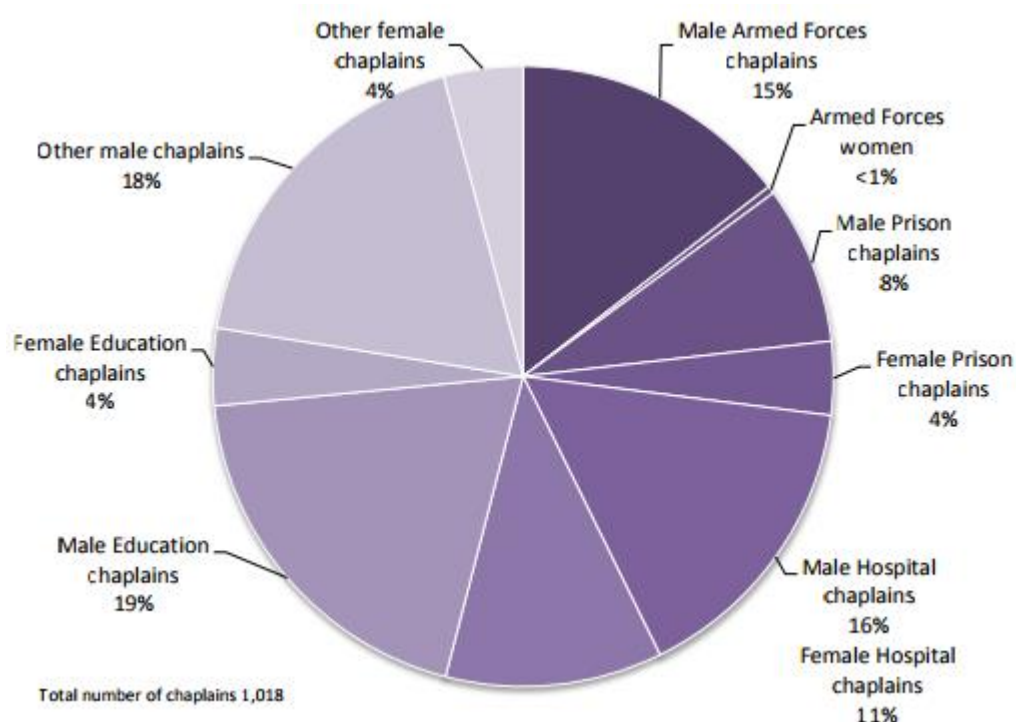
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<sup>228</sup> Respondent A1@d34.

<sup>229</sup> John Piper, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 31-59.

denomination has developed its current view of women in Christian leadership, with an interjection about how scripture has been used to support arguments on each side. In conclusion, there is a summary of precisely how the issues will impact on chaplains.

Other than specific data collected for this study, there are no other statistics recording the gender breakdown of chaplains in Cumbria. However, the most recent (2012) Church of England figures do illustrate the national position at that time.



The above chart shows the breakdown of chaplains' roles by gender in 2012, the largest number being education chaplains (23%). In all roles, the number of males exceeded the number of females, the difference being particularly pronounced for education and armed forces chaplains (at least 14



percentage points).<sup>230</sup> This broadly concurs with the situation in Cumbria as at 2016, where 63% of chaplain respondents identified as male, and 36% as female. The significant difference between the two sets of figures is that the Church of England data from 2012 include only ordained Anglican chaplains, whereas the quantitative responses for this study include both ordained and lay from all of the Mission Community partner denominations.

In practice, the gender of the chaplain in any of the Cumbrian models should have no effect whatsoever. Indeed, as various chaplains have been visited in their places of ministry, I uncovered no objective or anecdotal evidence that the issue is causing any division at all on the ground: no respondent indicated that their ministry is hampered by having women in leadership positions. Despite this, the very fact that one of the partner denominations is still very publicly wrestling with the issue of whether or not women can hold high office, might be considered a dark cloud over the multi-denominational nature of chaplaincies. Each Mission Community denomination has arrived at its current position over a period of time, and this has not been without contention.

The roots of the URC are firmly laid in the acknowledgement of women in ministry. At its foundation in 1972, one of the founding churches of the amalgamation, Congregationalism, had already been accepting women as ministers for many years. Therefore, the ordination of women has never been an issue for the URC. It should be noted, though, that a female

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<sup>230</sup> Church of England, "Statistics for Mission 2012: Ministry". [cited 26 September 2017]. Online: [www.churchofengland.org/media/1868964/ministry%20statistics%20final.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1868964/ministry%20statistics%20final.pdf)

Moderator was not appointed until 2010. The Methodists have been accepting women to the diaconate since 1890, and as presbyters since 1974. In addition, females have held the most senior positions of President and Vice President for many years. In contrast to this, the Church of England has, and still does, wrestle with the ordination of women to the priesthood. A significant number of parishes have signed Resolution 'A' or Resolution 'B'. Although repealed in November 2016 and replaced with a more generally worded 'declaration', these resolutions arose from the General Synod of 1992 and the vote to allow women to be ordained as priests.<sup>231</sup> They made provision for parishes to restrict ministry to men by Parochial Church Councils (PCC) passing one of two motions:

Resolution 'A': 'That this Parochial Church Council would not accept a woman as the minister who presides at or celebrates the Holy Communion or pronounces the Absolution.'

Resolution 'B': 'That this Parochial Church Council would not accept a woman as the incumbent or priest-in-charge of the benefice or as a team vicar for the benefice'

In regard to being accepted into the more senior positions in the Church of England, it was not until 2013 that the House of Bishops released

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<sup>231</sup> Carol Roberts et al., "The Ordination of Women and the Church of England Today: Two Integrities, But One Pattern of Decline in Membership Statistics", *J. Angl. Stud.* 4, no. 2 (2006): 201–18.

a statement on 'Women in the Episcopate'.<sup>232</sup> Subsequently, the first woman bishop in the UK was consecrated in 2015. Some, both inside and outside the Anglican Communion, felt that this was a betrayal of the authority of scripture. The hugely wide range of views on the weight of scripture produces its own suspicions, not only between the denominations, but also from chaplains within each denomination. In the exploration of an Anglican–Methodist covenant, prior to the interest of the URC, an Archbishops' Council report identified two ends of a very wide spectrum on the subject. At one extreme is the traditional conservative Protestant view of Biblical authority, which it quotes from a publication (*A Lamp to my Feet and a Light to my Path*) arising from the Methodist Conference of 1998.<sup>233</sup> At the other end of the spectrum is what the Archbishops' Council report calls the radical view of the Bible, which emphasises its human origins, and the problems which

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<sup>232</sup> Church of England, "The Women Bishops Debate", n.d., [cited 15 June 2017]. Online: [www.churchofengland.org/our-views/women-bishops/the-women-bishops-debate.aspx](http://www.churchofengland.org/our-views/women-bishops/the-women-bishops-debate.aspx) Some of the significant points of the report in regard to the holding of senior positions by females are contained in the following statement: 'At its meeting in York the House of Bishops of the Church of England has committed itself to publishing new ways forward to enable women to become bishops ... The House also approved the necessary changes in its standing orders to ensure the attendance of senior women clergy at its meetings. These changes were proposed following the House's decision at its meeting in December to ensure the participation of senior female clergy in its meetings until such time as there are six female members of the House, following the admission of women to the episcopate'.

<sup>233</sup> Martin Davie, "A Theological Workbook on An Anglican-Methodist Covenant", 41 [cited 28 September 2017]. Online: [www.google.co.uk/?gws\\_rd=ssl#safe=strict&q=anglican+Methodist+workbook](http://www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=ssl#safe=strict&q=anglican+Methodist+workbook) 'The Bible is the Word of God and is, therefore inerrant (free from all error and entirely trustworthy in everything which it records) and has complete authority in all matters of theology and behaviour. It is "God-breathed" and its human authors were channels of the divine word. The Christian's task is to discern accurately what the Bible teaches and then to believe and obey it. Reason, experience and tradition should be judged in the light of the Bible, not the other way around.'

these raise for the notion of Biblical authority.<sup>234</sup> It would appear that the question of women in leadership and the authority of the Bible are issues that may be intermingled, either with integrity to support a theological viewpoint, or mischievously to promote schism. The impact upon Mission Community chaplaincy models would be forceful, should any party choose to use Biblical authority in such a way.

As a late-comer to the Mission Community covenant, the Salvation Army would hold that it has always accepted, and indeed promoted, women in positions of church leadership. William Booth, its founder, is quoted as saying in 1908, 'I insist on the equality of women with men ... every officer and soldier should insist upon the truth that woman is as important, as valuable, as capable and as necessary to the progress and happiness of the world as man'.<sup>235</sup> Whilst it may be argued that this statement relates to a theology of equality, which all can relate to, and does not specifically address the issue of women in church leadership, it cannot be ignored that the Salvation Army developed significantly by giving women leadership responsibilities. By 1878, the number of women officers (41) was nearly equal to the number of male officers (49).<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Davie, "Theological Workbook", 42.

'The Bible comprises a diverse and often contradictory collection of documents that represent the experiences of various people in various times and places. The Christian's task is to follow in some way, the example of Christ. And to the extent that the Bible records evidence of his character and teaching, it offers a useful resource. However, in the late 20th century it is simply not possible to obey all its teachings since these stem from very human authors and often represent the ideology of particular groups or classes in an ancient and foreign culture. Reason and experience provide much more important tools for faith and practice.'

<sup>235</sup> Salvation Army, "Inclusion", n.d. [cited 19 June 2017]. Online: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/inclusion](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/inclusion)

<sup>236</sup> Salvation Army, "Inclusion".

In summary, my interpretation of the data is that the question of the role of women in Christian leadership crosses all three areas of potential impact. First, some chaplains might have to be willing to change their working practice in order to minister alongside (or under) those who do not share their view of the role of women in Christian leadership. Second, because this is still very much an issue in the Anglican Diocese of Carlisle, all chaplains may find it helpful to rethink their own theological position in terms of how far they are willing to be yoked with those with whom they fundamentally differ on this issue. Third, those who hold to the 'Ontologically Equal – Functionally Different' position, may find that there is no place for their chaplaincy ministry in publicly funded organisations (e.g. NHS). Overall, given that Methodists, URC and Salvation Army all share unanimity on the issue of women's ministry, with only a section of conservative evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics dissenting within the Church of England, it would appear unlikely that this subject alone would adversely impact chaplaincy within Mission Communities. Nevertheless, because chaplains mainly operate in a secular environment, the impact of parts of the Church still publicly holding views that run contrary to popular opinion might, at some level, be detrimental to chaplains and chaplaincy models.

## 11. DISCONNECTING THEME 5 – EPISCOPACY

This chapter begins with noting that some of the strong responses regarding episcopacy as a model of church governance arise out of the debate leading up to the publication of 'Mission and Ministry in Covenant'.<sup>237</sup> It goes on to identify the possible disconnect that might be felt if (as a consequence of the publication of 'Mission and Ministry in Covenant') the President of the Methodist Church is consecrated as a bishop through the gateway of the Anglican Church. An alternative view is then offered which proposes that a single point of oversight may be a beneficial tool for dealing with some of the current doctrinal tensions. The chapter concludes with the acknowledgement that, despite emanating from a smaller pool of data, the issue of episcopacy is of no less a concern to chaplains and, indeed, may have the greatest impact of all the disconnecting issues that have arisen.

### *11.1 Episcopacy – Establishing the Weight of the Collective View*

In response to the anonymous survey, only one respondent (when asked to 'identify any doctrinal relationships between your own denomination and that of the other three partners which, in your view, may be a challenge to overcome for the sake of unity') replied specifically, 'None acceptance of apostolic succession'.<sup>238</sup> However, there were other statements that expressed concern around the same issue, one of which was, 'Difficulty in ...

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<sup>237</sup> Church of England, "Mission and Ministry in Covenant", 2017. [cited 2 July 2017].  
Online:  
[www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/06/publication-of-mission-and-ministry-in-covenant.aspx](http://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/06/publication-of-mission-and-ministry-in-covenant.aspx)

<sup>238</sup> Respondent 49483327.

understanding how a non-episcopal church can work closely with episcopal ones'.<sup>239</sup> During interviews, this tension gained some momentum because of the perception that the Methodist Church is moving towards acceptance of an episcopal model. One respondent described this as, 'Methodists capitulating to Anglicanism'.<sup>240</sup> Two other respondents spoke firmly in favour of maintaining a clear gap between Methodists and Anglicans, their view being captured in the responses: 'Methodists in the UK reject episcopacy, as do the URC',<sup>241</sup> and, '...priesthood of all believers ... no bishops ... all ministers are equal'.<sup>242</sup> It would appear these statements of concern have arisen following the publication of 'Mission and Ministry in Covenant' in June 2017.

'Mission and Ministry in Covenant' grew out of the 2003 Joint Implementation Commission, where Anglicans and Methodists began the process of exploring coming together in full communion after two hundred years of separation. As this thesis is published, the two churches continue to seek to find a way of accepting Methodists into full communion with the See of Canterbury, in common with other churches of the Anglican Communion. In practice, this means that Anglican and Methodist ministers would become interchangeable for the purpose of leading worship. For it to be accepted, however, the President of the Methodist Church in Britain would have to be ordained and consecrated to the office of bishop. At the inaugural ceremony, this would be carried out by the laying on of hands of three Anglican bishops. Thereafter, it is currently understood that a process and protocol would be

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<sup>239</sup> Respondent 49487537.

<sup>240</sup> Respondent M1@a4.

<sup>241</sup> Respondent 49483327.

<sup>242</sup> Respondent 50652939.

devised for the gradual introduction of the passing on of episcopal succession from Methodist to Methodist. It is this absorption into Anglicanism that appears to be of some concern to Methodists, because some believe they are giving up their traditional position and theological understanding - and to Anglicans because some believe that Methodists are being integrated for convenience rather than from doctrinal conviction. Both of these statements are anecdotal and cannot be reliably evidenced, since the publication of 'Mission and Ministry' came after respondents had completed surveys, questionnaires and interviews.

Chaplains from the Free Churches might also argue that there is scant evidence for an episcopal model in the New Testament, and that what was acceptable and normal then, should also be normative practice for Bible-believing Christians today. Also, when previous attempts have been made to impose episcopacy, it has proved to be counter-productive to mission by the suppression of the necessary diversity required. Davie argues that this has particular relevance to Anglican, Methodist and Salvation Army structures.<sup>243</sup>

### *11.2 Episcopacy – Presenting Alternatives to the Collective View*

Despite the strong (and sometimes emotional) responses against Methodists adopting episcopacy through the gateway of the Anglican Church, there is

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<sup>243</sup> Davie, "Theological Workbook", 66.

'The separation of Methodism from the Church of England is often given as a classic example of this problem with the argument being that it was the inability of a rigid Anglican diocesan and parochial system to cope with the missionary needs of an 18<sup>th</sup> century England that meant that modern Methodism had to separate itself off from the Church of England in order to function effectively. In similar fashion, it is argued, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century William Booth came out from Methodism to form the Salvation Army because Methodist structures did not allow him the freedom to respond to the missionary needs of his day'.



also a body of opinion who see this coming together as a very positive act.<sup>244</sup>

There is validity in the argument that a single point of leadership (bishop), is organisationally preferable to multiple layers of oversight. Nevertheless, when considering impact, one also has to bear in mind that the whole concept of the expansion of episcopacy has international as well as local implications: all of the Mission Community partner denominations are part of wider, international groups of churches who operate under doctrinal tension. The Anglican Church, for example, wrestles with the demands of what is culturally acceptable in, say, North America, to what is acceptable in cultures in Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia. Some issues previously explored in this study (same-sex relationships and women in church leadership roles) have been exposed to particular public and media scrutiny in the UK. As a natural result of these tensions, some are asking for primates to be given, and be willing to exercise, more disciplinary powers to address those parts of the Anglican Communion who fail to observe, or flaunt, traditional teaching.

Free Churches, observing a warming in relationships between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, might be justified in fearing that, ultimately, expansion of episcopacy (along with the desire to keep doctrinal order) will result in one primate exercising pastoral oversight of the whole. Pointing to a House of Bishops statement in 1997, they might conclude that the Anglican Church has already conceded that the Bishop of Rome has been identified as an acceptable candidate for this office. Responding to a Papal encyclical on ecumenism (*Ut Unum Sint*), the House

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<sup>244</sup> Davie, "Theological Workbook", 67.

of Bishops made a pertinent statement in 'May They All Be One'.<sup>245</sup> This willingness by the Anglican Church to engage with the potential of a Roman Catholic Bishop of Rome at its head, may well be the underlying cause of concern for chaplains from the Free Churches (as well as many Anglicans). Despite this, Methodists have now taken a formal step towards episcopacy and, in their 1999 Conference statement, 'Called to Love and Praise', did not rule out the concept of a single point of primacy, including the Roman Catholic Pope.<sup>246</sup>

### *11.3 Episcopacy – Impact of Episcopacy on Chaplains*

Developments in the Methodist Church in 2017 towards accepting episcopacy have brought the issue into sharp focus for some Mission Community chaplains - but not all. Whilst respondents have articulated their opinions about structures of church governance in general, none have

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<sup>245</sup> Davie, "Theological Workbook" 68.

'Anglicans and Roman Catholics are at one in their understanding of the episcopate as a ministry involving not only oversight of each local church but a care for the universal communion of which each church is a member. ARCIC sees the office of the universal primate as a special and particular case of this care for universal communion which is proper for the episcopal office itself. Anglicans are thus by no means opposed to the principle and practice of a personal ministry at the world level in the service of unity. Indeed, increasingly their experience of the Anglican Communion is leading them to appreciate the proper need, alongside communal and collegial ministries, for a personal service of unity in the faith'.

<sup>246</sup> Davie, "Theological Workbook", 69.

'In the national and international dialogues of recent decades between Methodists and Roman Catholics, Methodists have affirmed that, if it could be shown that such a ministry was essential to the unity of the Church, then, by that token it must be part of God's will for the Church. In the Methodist view, such a ministry would need to be exercised in partnership and consultation with the whole people of God. At present, Roman Catholics and Methodists are not entirely agreed on what is 'essential' for the whole Church. Is the papacy essential, or desirable for the reasons already given? Methodists could not accept all aspects of papal ministry as it is currently exercised, but would be more open to a universal primacy understood as a ministry of service and unity rather than as a seat of authority. In effect, Methodists rule out no development compatible with our ethos which strengthens the unity and effectiveness of the Church'.

specifically said how the issue of episcopacy will affect their practical chaplaincy ministry. Most of the discussions arising appear to fall back to general misgivings about ecumenism. In particular, a reluctance for Free Church chaplains to accept closer union with the Anglican Church, and similar comments from Anglican chaplains to be seen to be moving towards Free Church theology. As with the issue of ecumenism, it is the perceived dilution of theology that appears to trouble some chaplains: they display no issue with the general concept of Christian unity. An overview of all responses concerning episcopacy reveals that very few chaplains felt that their ministry on the ground would be adversely impacted by a theology that holds that bishops can trace their office to a direct, uninterrupted line back to the Apostles.

In summary, my interpretation of the data is that if the Methodist Church should adopt an episcopal model of church governance, and the President of the Methodist Church in Britain were consecrated to the office of bishop, then this suggests an impact resulting in:

- a) A change of working practice between denominational chaplains and,
- b) A rethinking of the theological position of Methodist chaplains within ecumenical chaplaincy teams.

Whilst there may be a smaller amount of respondent data regarding episcopacy, nonetheless it does still appear to be a legitimate concern to chaplains, and the impact that it may have upon their ministry. Parallels can be drawn with many of the concerns arising from the issue of ecumenism. Also, the same risks arise of chaplains so wishing to identify in solidarity with

their service users, that there is a danger of them losing sight of their identity with the Church, arising from concerns about church governance: specifically, episcopacy.

## 12. CONCLUSION

The primary question running throughout this research was, 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models in Cumbria?' This chapter brings together and summarises the findings and resultant conclusions of the preceding chapters in order to establish that the answer to that question is: The impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models is a disconnection between chaplaincy practitioners and the outworking of ecumenical Mission Communities. For the purpose of this study, a working definition of impact was settled on as that which:

- a) Results in a chaplain changing their working practice with either colleagues or service users or,
- b) Causes a chaplain to rethink their theological position in any way or,
- c) Apparently affects the relationship between the chaplain and the people or organisations that they serve.

The chapter closes with a clear set of recommendations as to how chaplains can re-engage with ecumenical Mission Communities and understand the relevance to their chaplaincy ministries.

Since this work is calculated to be read by chaplains in Cumbria, with the intention of encouraging them to examine how they engage and function with Mission Communities, a diagrammatic illustration of the structure of the whole thesis was included at the outset: this to assist readers to navigate their way around the study, as well as providing a convenient point of reference.

The opening chapter acknowledges my own limitations as a chaplaincy practitioner for over 40 years, at the same time as recognising any element of unconscious bias arising from my current role as 'Chaplain to Chaplains' within the Mission Community structure. It locates the research against the backdrop of a major reorganisation (which commenced in 2014). This eventually saw the Church of England, Methodist, URC and Salvation Army coming together in a formal ecumenical partnership. The result of this alliance is that the 270 Anglican parishes of the Diocese of Carlisle are gradually being restructured and grouped together with the other denominations to form 40 Mission Communities across Cumbria. Recognising that this radical change of working practice creates a theoretical problem, some reasons and desired outcomes were set forth: the chief of these being that the research was an opportunity to contribute to the development of joint working in Cumbria. The product of this original contribution is that chaplains in Cumbria will be able to identify themselves in this study, and subsequently assess the way that they function and engage with Mission Communities.

A further self-imposed limitation was in the scope of those included in the research. A methodological decision was made to exclude any users of chaplaincy services: this for ethical reasons. Whilst it was acknowledged that a separate, discrete project focussed on service users (with a carefully managed ethical framework) would sit comfortably alongside this research, the methodological choice was based on the complexity of protecting those

service users who may be vulnerable adults. Another methodological choice was to limit the literature review.

Since a full literature review has already been submitted as part of this professional doctorate portfolio of work (and evaluated as reaching the required standard) the literature review within the Introduction concentrated its attention on nine publications which have directly helped to shape and support this research. Alongside these are acknowledgements of other early influences, which are traced back to 1983 and the 'Tiller Report'.

The overall methodology proceeded on the premise that, if Christian chaplaincy is incarnational, then the presence of God must be in that place. This was explored qualitatively by surveys and interviews. These methods had in mind a phenomenological aspect: that chaplains were trying to make sense of the phenomena of Mission Communities - and that this indeed was interpretist: meaning that, in its epistemological sense, chaplains were trying to grasp the subjective interpretation of the impact of the implementation of Mission Communities.

For contextual purposes, Chapter 2 was largely descriptive of the development of Mission Communities. However, it also reviewed the policy documents that were pertinent to the formation of Mission Communities, concluding that there were four publications which led to the formation of two principal policy documents: 'Better at Being Church in Every Community: A Strategy for Ministry', and 'God for All'.

God for All was identified as the key document behind Mission Communities. Its main characteristic is that it is evangelistic in tone: the

stated outcome being, 'to enable all people in Cumbria to have the opportunity to become followers of Jesus within a Christian community'. It was this statement that led some chaplains to fear that they were being shepherded towards proselytising – and the subsequent interpretation in Chapter 2 that this was one of the underlying causes of disconnection between chaplains and Mission Communities. The forerunner to God for All was Better at Being Church in Every Community: A Strategy for Ministry.

This study interpreted Better at Being Church as a less clumsy instrument than God for All. Instead of a pre-determined target (like God for All), it simply gave a direction of travel: stressed the need to be willing to give up what is held dear, and to work with a missional mindset which accepts new understandings of ministry. If Cumbria had continued with this, fewer chaplains would have felt disaffected. Chapter 2 concluded that Better at Being Church was also a forerunner to Receptive Ecumenism.

Receptive Ecumenism was not an expression that was widely used (if used at all) at that time. However, when this research revisited the main denominational leaders and asked, 'At the planning stage (for ecumenical Mission Communities), what was your understanding of the theological vision and place of chaplains within the strategy?', their combined answers were interpreted as Receptive Ecumenism in all but name. Chapter 7.2 suggested that chaplains would have been more committed to Mission Communities if it had been put to them that Receptive Ecumenism rejects the notion that one denomination has all the theological answers, as well as all the resources, to operate independently at either local or national level – rather than the single



evangelistic objective of God for All. A Parallel policy document relating directly to chaplains (Chaplaincy and Discipleship) was published in 2011, and then revised in 2014 to coincide with Mission Communities.

Chaplaincy and Discipleship openly acknowledged that there was no clarity about how chaplains relate to a diocesan vision of growing disciples through evangelism. This study interpreted it as pre-evangelism – a setting in place of relationships before evangelism is possible. My observation of this document is that it supports the evangelistic direction of God for All, at the same time as understanding why some chaplains are uncomfortable with the emphasis. Having engaged with the policy documents, gaps were still found in the documentation and minutes of meetings.

Extensive interviews with one of the senior Anglican leaders subjectively filled in some of the missing information. Nonetheless, apart from some objective details, much of what was gleaned from this respondent could not be evidenced and was interpreted as coming from an indifferent attitude towards Mission Communities. This was balanced against the more positive outlook from Butland's publication, 'Growing Spirituality', and his belief that it was now possible to 'have the freedom and permission to work together'. However, Chapter 2 concluded with the assertion that it is not possible to evidence whether or not this aspiration of liberty is shared at grassroots level - before presenting a timeline summary of events.

Chapter 3 concerned itself with the collection of data. It began by establishing its own definition of a chaplain: all those with a Christian ministry outside of a parish or other church setting. It then set about identifying these

personnel from various sources and compiling charts illustrating the demographic range of chaplains across Cumbria. Analysis of these charts showed that the composition of chaplains is not as diverse as the rest of the UK. Likewise, Cumbria is not a diverse county when seen in the light of UK census figures from 2011. Details of the data, along with some further analysis, can be found in Appendix 3. As well as this quantitative data, qualitative responses were sought.

Of 74 chaplains identified as being in scope, 22 chose to respond to questions about their attitudes to Mission Communities. Chapter 3 reproduced the responses without edit or comment: this in order to allow chaplains to identify themselves and the views of their colleagues without suspicion that they had been misrepresented. At the research design-stage certain responses were expected (regarding mission). However, since these were not forthcoming, I pursued an avenue that, perhaps, chaplains had not been adequately consulted prior to the implementation of Mission Communities. A supplementary questionnaire was sent out. Interpretation of the responses show that my thought that chaplains were not adequately consulted was mistaken: no chaplains returned that they were discouraged in any way from engaging. Therefore, the consultation process was adequate.

Chapter 4 was a bridge between the quantitative and qualitative chapters. Its function was to set into context the relationship between chaplains and service users. It took four representative examples of service users in order to illustrate (from a service users' perspective) their relationship to chaplains. The samples came from the fields of prison,

healthcare, emergency services and urban chaplaincies. For the ethical reasons previously explained, no evidence for this exercise was sought directly from any service user. Moving on from who chaplaincy services were for, the chapter then asked who ministry was being carried out by – who are the chaplains who are offering this service, how are they trained, who are they accountable to, how is their work measured and how might they engage in a healthy partnership with their host organisation?

In the exploration of who the chaplains were, certain distinctions emerged between chaplains and other clergy/lay ministers. From these distinctives a conclusion was drawn that there was some defensiveness on the part of chaplains due to, a) demands to justify their existence, b) anxiety to prove their worth by elevating their status and c) pressure to justify their calling.

Some of the pressure for chaplains to justify their existence was reasoned to come from an external demand to quantify the work carried out. Whilst Piper's strong call to divorce religious practice from any secular model was considered, this study came down on the side that engagement with a robust, even secular, model of measurement would enhance and protect religious freedom – at the same time as promoting a healthy relationship with the host organisation.

Much of the substance of a healthy partnership is not only to do with acceptance of measurement and other 'systems', but also in the collaborative use of language and terminology. With this in mind, an assertion was made that chaplains must be multi-lingual: they need to be able to articulate the

language of their faith to the secular setting in which they exercise their ministry. Further, chaplains have to do this in a way that hearers will understand. To articulate themselves effectively, they also need to understand the language of their hearers. This, in turn, is a three-way process, because they also have to reflect the language of the public arena back to the Church.

The training of chaplains is an area in which the National Secular Society takes aim. They were seen to argue that most religious chaplains are untrained volunteers who promote themselves to enhance their status to a pseudo-professional level. Whilst some of the criticism from that quarter was seen as valid, this study, after comparing the training opportunities for chaplains, arrived at the verdict that this cannot be qualified from the evidence: the majority of chaplains have received some level of training. The inconsistency of training is something that is returned to in the Recommendations subheading of this Conclusion. Before going on to the qualitative chapters, an interjection was made to do with the question of mission.

Chapter 5 (Mission) interjects into the study at this point because, unexpectedly, the subject did not surface with any significant weight. As disconnections began emerging from the manual thematic analysis, my expectation was that the subject of mission would be one of them: it was not. I anticipated that chaplains would engage with and perhaps challenge the theology of mission, and the impact of that theology within the context of their own chaplaincy ministry: a recognition that chaplains, whilst thoroughly

immersed in their faith, must also be fully absorbed into the context of their secular setting. The assumption that chaplains would seek to link the two aspects of church and context into one theological expression was mistaken. For respondents, a greater emphasis was on presence ministry (based on the ontological premise that if Christian chaplaincy is incarnational, then the presence of God must be in that place). This was challenged by a contrasting theological position: that God is present (and may act) in every place, regardless of the presence of a chaplain to represent Him.

The qualitative chapters (6-11) addressed the disconnecting themes that arose: ecumenism, same-sex issues, sacraments, women in Christian leadership and episcopacy. Each theme was examined under three subheadings:

- i) Identifying the weight of the collective view. This brought together what could be reasonably presented as a consolidated position.
- ii) Presenting alternatives to the collective view. After ascertaining the well-accepted position, this subheading presented evidence which challenged the consolidated position. These came from other chaplains, as well as outside commentators. The reason for including this balance was to fulfil the outcome stated in the Introduction: that this research might challenge and contribute to the ways that chaplains engage and function after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this thesis.
- iii) Impact of the issue on chaplains. After setting out the views and alternatives of each theme, this subheading identified precisely how the

positions and alternatives might impact upon chaplains, using the definition of impact previously stated.

Chapter 7 addressed the disconnecting theme of ecumenism. The predominant trend was for respondents to highlight the tensions of working with other denominations. This was evidenced by a tide of negative comments that arose when asked specifically about perceived doctrinal difficulties. Significantly, those included concerns about:

- a) How various sacramental differences can be reconciled.
- b) Contrasting denominational understandings of same-sex issues.
- c) Local pockets of resistance to women in positions of Christian leadership.
- d) Relinquishing distinctive denominational 'truth'. Related to this particular concern were doubts about drifting into a new denomination.
- e) Misgivings about being yoked with an Established Church.

Based on the evidence of comments received from respondents who saw difficulties with the ecumenical focus of Mission Communities, their position was summarised as:

- First, we do not wish to dilute our historic and traditional beliefs in order to accommodate the views of others. Equally, we do not wish others to dilute their own core beliefs to accommodate us.
- Second, we do not wish to evolve into a new denomination.

- Third, we do not wish to be yoked with an Established Church that is inextricably linked to the State.

Despite these misgivings, it appeared that ecumenism understood as conformity (rather than unity) was the main stumbling block to ecumenical Mission Communities. The contrast to this was seen to be local ecumenism, leading to Receptive Ecumenism.

Receptive Ecumenism was interpreted as asking what each of the denominations' traditions can learn from each other – whilst at the same time enhancing their own tradition and unique identity. The assumption was that if all were asking this question seriously, and acting upon it, then all would be moving in ways that would deepen authentic respective identities, at the same time as drawing chaplains into more intimate relationships. Receptive Ecumenism rejects the notion that one denomination has all the theological answers, as well as all the resources, to operate independently at either local or national level. In practice, it is quite the opposite to the conformity that chaplains seemed to fear.

Having been made clear by denominational leaders that 'buying-in' to ecumenical Mission Communities is obligatory, the impact on some chaplains is that they will have to change their working practice. This will solidify a sense of disaffection amongst those who are not willing to comply – resulting ultimately in over-identifying with their service users and/or host organisation: imperceptibly cutting themselves off from their source of authority and accountability.

How the wider issue of ecumenism might impact upon chaplains within the Mission Communities remains to be seen. Even so, whilst non-conformists continue to reflect upon and wrestle with their relationship with the Established Church, there will remain an underlying tension around ecumenism for some time to come. Nevertheless, the majority response from chaplains is overwhelmingly that they will continue to work together for the common good of service users wherever the opportunity presents itself, despite any academic, theological reservations that they may harbour. A similarly divisive subject amongst the Church at large are the questions around same-sex issues.

Chapter 8 addressed same-sex issues. It did not rehearse the well-documented arguments around same-sex matters that were prevalent at that time. Interpretation of chaplains' responses were that their concerns revolved around:

- a) The marked differences between the denominations – specifically in respect of same-sex marriage and blessings. The common concern was that there was such a divergence of opinion and practice within the partner denominations, that it would have a severe and adverse effect on chaplaincy. In many ways the response to this issue reflected some of the opinions that were articulated about ecumenism. It was not necessarily the issue that caused alarm, but how the Churches could work together in chaplaincy, at the same time as retaining their individual stance in doctrine and practice towards the subject.



- b) The Church being perceived to be out of step with public opinion, and sitting uncomfortably with the law.

Chaplains reading this study in order to assess how they engage and function with Mission Communities were left in no doubt about the place of the 2010 Equalities Act. The weight of argument proposed by public-sector chaplains was that, if they are not fully conformed to both the letter and spirit of the law in terms of sexual orientation, then not only is their integrity questioned by their employer, but also their suitability to minister in that place: an impact which cannot be ignored. However, there was a marginal alternative view which challenged the greater weight of opinion.

The alternative initially came from outside of chaplaincy, and argued that Christianity must maintain its distinctiveness in order to retain its credibility – and there are readings in scripture which challenge the practice of homosexuality, thus making it distinctive. This is correct if it is emphasising that a range of distinctive voices (including other faiths), contribute to a more rounded society. In chaplaincy terms, that means that even if the historic and traditional view dissents from the current trend of opinion, it must still be heard.

Supportive of this view was a respondent who wished to make a point about same-sex marriage. In the light of the view expressed above, that this opinion must be heard, a place was given to it in the chapter. It outlined a particular understanding of marriage and was supported by scripture. This did, however, raise an issue about the position of the Bible and its authority

within the other strands of tradition and reason. It was found that whether one holds scripture at the top of a very narrow-based triangle (with tradition and reason being the other points), or whether one adopts a flatter model is not altogether relevant where, in many chaplaincy daily scenarios, the Bible is not something that is at the centre of most service users' lives.

As with ecumenism, how significant an issue this will be as Mission Communities develop is not entirely possible to predict. Even so, the greatest impact of same-sex matters on Mission Communities might be that acknowledgement of the diversity of opinion will, if carried out with care and sensitivity, allow and encourage chaplains to minister to all sections of the community - without allowing theological doctrine to usurp pastoral responsibility. Both pastoral and doctrinal reasons appear to be at the heart of another disconnecting theme: the sacraments.

Chapter 9 addressed the issues that were raised by respondents about how the administration of sacraments will work within a multi-denominational setting. The chapter began with a brief look at what chaplains meant when they referred to sacraments. My interpretation was that they were invariably referring to holy communion, or the eucharist. Chaplains' anxieties were shown to revolve around:

- i) A difference of theology between the denominations concerning 'real' or 'spiritual' presence at the communion table/altar.
- ii) The tensions surrounding the prospect of lay presidency gaining theological hold across the Mission Communities.
- iii) A difference of practice in how the rite is carried out.

Whilst there was shown to be some misunderstanding about the theology of 'others' (particularly around real/spiritual presence), and that the question of lay presidency was a concern only coming from ordained clergy (whose position/status may be under threat), I took the chief misgiving of chaplains to be that of inconsistency of practice.

The alternative view to inconsistency was largely identified from McGowan, Bradshaw and O'Dea. Piecing their evidence together, this chapter showed that there never was a constant rite – all eucharistic practices have evolved over time. Whilst understanding the apprehensions of Mission Community chaplains, to grasp that this diversity of practice actually enhances the overall quality of chaplaincy provision within Cumbria is essential to allaying some of the largely unfounded fears of some respondents.

In terms of overall impact upon chaplains and chaplaincy models, it may be that the issue of diversity of sacramental practice was overstated by a small number of respondents. Indeed, because chaplains are free to continue within the traditions of their own denomination, one might not discern any real impact at all. Another theme of disconnection though, women in Christian leadership, continues to be a debating point in Cumbria.

Whilst readers outside of Cumbria may believe that the place of women in Christian leadership has been resolved, Chapter 10 was a reminder that there are still influential voices in Cumbria who lean towards the complementarian position. The chapter illustrated the results of a debate between the Anglican Carlisle Deanery Synod's discussion concerning

women and the episcopate. They were reproduced (unedited) to give a snapshot of the train of thought at that time.

Placing the subject of women in leadership into context, the study reviewed the theoretical positions of all the national partner denominations. This showed, in general terms, that it is only the Anglican Church who are still not unanimous in their view of women in ordained leadership roles. The weight of opinion amongst all Mission Community chaplains interviewed was that, if parts of the Church of England persisted in publicly wrestling with and challenging the notion of women in ministry, then the Church as a whole (not only Anglicans) would be perceived as accepting inequality of gender, and that this would be an obstruction to chaplaincy across Cumbria and beyond. On one level it could be that this is a uniquely Anglican problem, since all the other partner denominations have women at all levels of leadership. In addition to that, it is a diminishing problem even in the Church of England, since Anglicans now have women bishops. Nevertheless, this research was located in Cumbria, where there is a strong representation of Anglican conservative evangelicals. These appeared to subscribe to the complementarian construct of Piper, that women are, 'Ontologically Equal – Functionally Different'. This body of Cumbrian evangelicals have considerable influence due to, I observe, the size and wealth of their churches - but this was not explored or evidenced in the main body of this study.

In summary, the question of the role of women in Christian leadership crossed all three areas of potential impact:

- a) First, some chaplains will have to be willing to change their working practice in order to minister alongside (or under) those who do not share their view of the role of women in Christian leadership.
- b) Second, because this is still very much an issue in the Anglican Diocese of Carlisle, all chaplains will find it helpful to rethink their own theological position in terms of how far they are willing to be yoked with those with whom they fundamentally differ on this issue.
- c) Third, those who hold to the 'Ontologically Equal – Functionally Different' position, will find that there is no place for their chaplaincy ministry in publicly funded organisations (e.g. NHS).

Overall, given that Methodists, URC and Salvation Army all share unanimity on the issue of women's ministry, with only a section of conservative evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics dissenting within the Church of England, it is unlikely that this subject alone would adversely impact chaplaincy within Mission Communities. Nevertheless, because chaplains mainly operate in a secular environment, the impact of parts of the Church still publicly holding views that run contrary to popular opinion might, at some level, be detrimental to chaplains and chaplaincy models. The final disconnecting issue arising from responses was the question of episcopacy.

Chapter 11 noted that, whilst only one respondent directly pointed to the subject of episcopacy, several others sought to articulate how they might perceive a joint theological understanding between Methodists and Anglicans. This was further probed when one respondent drew attention to a

Methodist report which indicated that, for the sake of unity, Methodists would not rule out a single point of primacy, including a papacy. Yet, of more concern to some (both Methodist and Anglican) respondents, was the publication of 'Mission and Ministry in Covenant', which introduced the prospect of Methodists accepting episcopacy through the gateway of the Church of England. As with the issue of ecumenism, it was the perceived dilution of theology that appeared to trouble chaplains. They displayed no issue with the general concept of Christian unity, but some harboured reservations about accepting an episcopal theology, believing that its impact upon their chaplaincy ministry would be negative. In contrast to the weight of misgivings, a view was expressed that a single point of leadership would have some benefits (especially given the cultural clashes between North America and the likes of Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia). The main advantage being that a single primate, who makes pronouncements and edicts that are binding on all who wish to remain in communion, removes the tension of ambiguity.

Summarising the issue of episcopacy and its impact on chaplains - if the Methodist Church should adopt an episcopal model of church governance, and the President of the Methodist Church in Britain were consecrated to the office of bishop, then this suggests an impact resulting in:

- a) A change of working practice between denominational chaplains and,
- b) A rethinking of the theological position of Methodist chaplains within ecumenical chaplaincy teams.

Also, there is a real danger of chaplains so wishing to identify in solidarity with their service users, that there may be a danger of them losing sight of their identity with the Church, arising from concerns about church governance: specifically, episcopacy.

### *12.1 Reconnection Recommendations*

A number of considerations inform four recommendations. The intention of the recommendations is to promote the reconciliation of chaplains to the ecumenical Mission Community ethos.

It should be noted that two of the disconnecting themes were current points of debate in the Church as a whole. This naturally attracted impact observations from chaplains which may, or may not, still hold relevance to a future study. However, having collected much data and followed up with supplementary questions as the research direction developed; and then having analysed all the responses under the scrutiny of the research question, 'What is the impact of Mission Communities on chaplaincy models throughout Cumbria?' three things are evident in conclusion.

First, a significant number of chaplains were willing to engage in the research, make comment and raise issues both positive and negative. The most obvious negative indicated that chaplains were disenfranchised, and not adequately included in the consultation process. Yet, upon further interrogation, and the sending out of a supplementary mid-research questionnaire, it became clear from responses that no chaplain said that they were discouraged in any way from engaging in the consultation process.

Indeed, the majority responded that they were either 'encouraged' or 'greatly encouraged'. This raises the question of why then, did so many chaplains fail to engage with the consultation process? The answer appears to be that a significant proportion of chaplains have chosen to isolate themselves. The reasons for this are not entirely clear, but from a small number of responses that were more specific, I conclude that some chaplains consider themselves as a specialist ministry, of which the wider church has little understanding. Therefore, they did not believe that Mission Communities would have any significant impact upon their ministry. There might be a danger that this attitude risks chaplains losing sight of their identity with the Church, due to their desire to over-identify with their service users.

Second, those senior church leaders who initiated and drove the ecumenical Mission Community model failed to articulate that this was not an exercise in conformity. In fact, although unsaid, it was a move towards the form of ecumenism which developed from the first Receptive Ecumenism conference (2006) in Durham. Whilst Receptive Ecumenism does not answer all the challenges of anti-ecumenists, it does at least provide a framework for joint working which cannot be identified as conformity at any cost.

The third conclusion arises from a much more positive perspective. It is another view as to why so many chaplains failed to engage in the consultation process. A substantial body of chaplains applaud the concept of Mission Communities. They particularly express the ecumenical nature of the initiative, and the fact that it is under the umbrella of God for All. Their reasons for not being involved, therefore, lie in the belief that chaplaincy



ministry is already Mission Community: most chaplaincy models are multi-denominational, working hard to meet the specific needs of their service users and accepting, or working around, the tensions of sharing differing aspects of theology as they do so, whilst at the same time remaining loyal to their own denomination. The new Mission Communities are simply catching-up with what some chaplains have already been naturally doing for a long time.

Finally, the outcomes did not identify a definitive explanation of how the introduction of Mission Communities impacts upon chaplains in terms of the stated criteria of:

- a) results in a chaplain changing their working practice with either colleagues or service users;
- b) causes a chaplain to rethink their theological position in any way, or;
- c) Apparently affects the relationship between the chaplain and the people or organisations that they serve.

The research did, however, meet the outcome of providing enough new information for chaplains to assess how they engage and function after identifying themselves and/or their colleagues in this thesis. In addition, the recommendations that accompany this Conclusion may assist chaplains and Mission Communities to reconnect.

The advantage of capturing and analysing data at such an early stage in the development of Mission Communities, is that it begins the reflexive process before (negative) practices become embedded. However, whilst the

process that has been started will lay some foundations for others to build upon, the results of this early research could be used as the start of a longitudinal piece of work, returning to the research question at the planned conclusion of God for All in 2020.

As preparation for the follow-up to God for All is starting to take shape, the following recommendations could result in a positive receptive missional ecumenicity: as the diverse parties identify themselves and their various denominational colouring, they learn from each other what is positive - this builds a foundation of reconciliation which converts the disconnect to a reconnect.

1. Develop a generic training package for all chaplains in Cumbria. It should be made clear that this would not replace any of the specialist/mandatory training that some institutional chaplains undertake. It would be a complementary resource which concludes with a commissioning, or letter of authority, from a denominational leader which confirms that the chaplain has completed all modules to a satisfactory standard - and is therefore authorised to carry out chaplaincy ministry in Cumbria. The advantage of this recommendation is that all chaplains would be aware of what every other chaplain has been taught: there would be no denominational bias. The intended effect of such a package is two-fold:
  - i) To bring chaplains together in a non-denominational format: a shared identity evolves from common training.
  - ii) To provide an opportunity to change the terminology: from

ecumenism (perceived negatively as conformity), to Receptive Ecumenism (learning from each other, with no threat to denominational identity).

2. Currently, Cumbria holds an annual Ministry Development Day for all lay and ordained personnel. It is promoted as mandatory attendance. My observation, after having attended many of these days, is that much of it is irrelevant to chaplains. This recommendation is that a separate Chaplains Development Day is held annually – this to address the specific training and development needs of chaplains.
3. The hazard of bringing chaplains together with a recommended training package and a separate development day, is that it risks entrenching those chaplains who already feel a sense of ‘them’ (parish-based ministers) and ‘us’ (community-based chaplains). There is a danger that implementing these two recommendations in isolation increases the disconnection between chaplains and Mission Communities. This third recommendation is that the gap is bridged by regular, formal, meetings between chaplains and Mission Community leaders.
4. The annual Ministry Development Day for all lay and ordained ministers in Cumbria is centred around a keynote speaker. This recommendation is that the continued negative use of the term ecumenism is addressed by inviting a leading authority in Receptive Ecumenism to address the Ministry Development Day – and to theme the whole day around how Cumbria understands and employs a

Receptive Ecumenism ethos. This too reconnects parish ministers and chaplains by the shared use and understanding of terminology that has previously contributed to the sense of disconnection.

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## 14. APPENDIX 1 – ENQUIRY ONE: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Will you describe your chaplaincy role (in context) and give a short pen-picture of yourself, your ministry, and your faith tradition (including your denomination).
2. Please identify any doctrinal differences between your own denomination and that of the other three partners which, in your view, may be easily overcome for the sake of unity.
3. Please identify any doctrinal differences between your own denomination and that of the other three partners which, in your view, may be a challenge to overcome for the sake of unity.
4. How might Mission Communities enhance your role as chaplain?
5. How might Mission Communities impede your role as chaplain?
6. What, if any, does your host organisation (employer) understand by the term 'mission?'
7. Would you like to make any other observations or comments about the introduction of ecumenical Mission Communities?

## 15. APPENDIX 2 – ENQUIRY TWO: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. In which age range do you belong?

Under 20

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

Over 70

Prefer not to say

2. How would you describe your gender?

Male

Female

Transgender

Prefer not to say

3. How would you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual/straight

Homosexual (gay/lesbian)

Bisexual

Not listed

Prefer not to say

4. How would you describe your ethnic group or background?

White – All groups

Mixed – Any mixed multiple ethnic group

Asian/Asian British

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

Any other ethnic group

Prefer not to say

**5.** Do you consider yourself to have any form of recognised disability?

Yes

No

**6.** In which field(s) do you exercise your chaplaincy?

Agricultural

Arts

Care Homes

Civic/Law Courts

Emergency Services

Health Care

Industrial

Military Cadet Forces

Mothers' Union

Prisons

Retail

Schools, Colleges and Universities

Sports

Street/Community

Urban

Youth Groups

Other than those listed above

**7.** Do you have any ministry alongside your chaplaincy, for example, parish responsibility?

Yes

No

**8.** How long have you been a chaplain?

Less than 1 year

Between 1 and 3 years

Between 3 and 6 years

Between 6 and 9 years

Between 9 and 12 years

Between 12 and 15 years

Over 15 years

**9.** To which religious denomination do you associate yourself?

United Reformed Church

Methodist

Anglican

Salvation Army

Other

**10.** What is your ministry status?

Ordained

Lay

**11.** Have you been through any kind of commissioning process by your denomination to recognise your chaplaincy role?



Yes

No

Don't know

**12.** Have you received any specific chaplaincy training?

Yes

No

Don't know

**13.** How would you describe your terms of chaplaincy ministry?

Full-time paid

Full-time voluntary

Part-time paid

Part-time voluntary

**14.** Noting the introductory letter, consent and data protection attachments, would you be willing to engage in a one-hour interview with a researcher or follow-up questionnaire?

Yes – Interview

Yes – Follow-up questionnaire

Yes – Interview and questionnaire

No

## 16. APPENDIX 3 - DETAILS OF DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

The following data illustrates that, in many areas of diversity, Cumbria is out of step with the national trend. For example, 80% of England and Wales registered as being born in England at the 2011 census; whilst in Cumbria 92.1% of residents reported being English born.<sup>247</sup> Nationally, 9% responded that their country of birth was not the UK (or Ireland or other European Union – including accession countries – those in the process of joining the European Community). This contrasts with 1.9% in Cumbria.<sup>248</sup> Furthermore, 4.3% of households in England and Wales have no people who speak English as their main language, whereas only 1% in Cumbria are in the same position.<sup>249</sup>

### *Religion*

#### England and Wales

Total population: 56,075,912

Christian: 33,243(59.3%)

Buddhist: 247,743 (0.4%)

Hindu: 816,633 (1.5%)

Jewish: 263,346 (0.5%)

Muslim: 2,706,066 (4.8%)

#### Cumbria

Total population: 499,859

Christian: 359,235 (71.9%)

Buddhist: 1,353 (0.3%)

Hindu: 559 (0.1%)

Jewish: 203 (0%)

Muslim: 1,336 (0.3%)

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<sup>247</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.

<sup>248</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.

<sup>249</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.

Sikh: 423,158 (0.8%)

Sikh: 64 (0%)

Other religion: 240,530 (0.4%)

Other religion: 1,364 (0.3%)

No religion: 14,097,299 (25.1%)

No religion: 101,496 (20.3%)

Not stated: 4,038,032 (7.2%)

Not stated: 34,248 (6.9%)

Two notable statistics are prominent: one is that the religion of Cumbria is predominantly (71.9%) Christian.<sup>250</sup> The other is the significant lack of

Muslims (0.3%) in comparison with the rest of England and Wales (4.8%).<sup>251</sup>

There are no significant centres of Islam in rural Cumbria, nor in any of the

three urban conurbations in the county: Carlisle, Kendal and Barrow-in-

Furness. This may well be due to the way that immigrants, particularly

Pakistani Muslims, began entering the UK in response to a plea for workers

to meet labour needs in the heavy industrial areas of the West Midlands and

Lancashire/Yorkshire mill towns in the 1950s. Whilst early economic migrants

may well have considered their entry into the UK to be temporary, the

introduction in 1962 of a new Act became a turning point between transience

and permanence.<sup>252</sup> As a result, Muslim families became reunited in their

places of original settlement. To date, the demographic of expansion has

been to major towns in the UK, but not to rural communities such as

Cumbria. This may change as refugees continue to flee from war-torn

countries to the UK where local councils, including those in Cumbria, have

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<sup>250</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.

<sup>251</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.

<sup>252</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, *The Pakistani Muslim Community in England: Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities* (London: HMSO, 2009), 25.

agreed to receive them. The next census in 2021 may well illustrate a very different set of non-Christian demographics in Cumbria.

## Age

### England and Wales

Total population: 56,075,912

0-15 years: 10,579,132 (18.9%)

16-64 years: 36,273,707 (64.7%)

65+ years: 9,223,073 (16.64%)

### Cumbria

Total population: 499,858

0-15 years: 83,449 (16.7%)

16-64 years: 313,479 (62.7%)

65+ years: 102,889 (20.6%)

The census figures for Cumbria broadly parallel those for the whole of England and Wales, except for the upper band (65+ years), where there is a close to 4% discrepancy. This might be due to the number of people in this age bracket who retire to rural Cumbria. The chaplaincy statistics also reflect that the majority (64%) of active chaplains are over 61 years of age. This leaning towards the upper age bracket is limited neither to chaplaincy nor Cumbria; it appears to be a national trend. Linda Woodhead, Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University comments: 'Ministry in the Church has become increasingly a middle-aged or older person's calling'.<sup>253</sup> Woodhead reflects that the previous norm was for young men, often straight from university, to enter ordained ministry, and suggests that the reason for this is that all these have 'grown old together and simply recruited others of

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<sup>253</sup> Linda Woodhead, "Not Enough Boots on the Ground", *The Church Times* (7 February 2014), retrieved from [www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2014/7-february/features/features/not-enough-boots-on-the-ground](http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2014/7-february/features/features/not-enough-boots-on-the-ground)

the same age or older'.<sup>254</sup> Woodhead's observation is only partially pertinent to this research, since it relates solely to ordained clergy and does not take into account lay chaplains.

## *Gender*

### England and Wales

Total population: 56,075,912

Male: 27,573,376 (49.2%)

Female: 28,502,536 (50.8%)

### Cumbria

Total population: 499,858

246,065 (49.2%)

Female: 253,793 (50.8%)

Whilst the gender balance nationally and locally is the same, in chaplaincy there is an imbalance of 27% towards males. Linking gender with the above age statistics, Woodhead states that there are fewer than 100 full-time stipendiary clergy under the age of 30, and only one in five of them is a woman. She goes on to observe:

The number of women under the age of 35 being ordained is tiny, and it seems that younger women are either not coming forward for ordination, or are not being recommended for training. In 2012, 71 per cent of candidates under the age of 40 who were recommended for training were male.<sup>255</sup>

The gender imbalance in Cumbria chaplaincy then, may not be an inherent flaw, but simply a reflection of the national picture in terms of those coming forward (or being accepted) for ordination.

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<sup>254</sup> Woodhead, *Not Enough Boots*.

<sup>255</sup> Woodhead, *Not Enough Boots*.

## *Sexuality*

Whilst the questionnaire to chaplains in Cumbria did ask about sexuality, the 2011 census did not. The most relevant question in the census does, however, record those 'In a Registered Same-Sex Civil Partnership'.

### England and Wales

Total population: 56,075,912

Registered in a same-sex  
civil partnership

104,942 (0.2%)

### Cumbria

Total population: 499,858

Registered in a same-sex  
civil partnership

737 (0.2%)

In an attempt to identify the diversity of sexuality amongst chaplains in Cumbria, the question was asked, 'How do you describe your sexuality?' The following options were offered, with responses in parentheses:

Heterosexual/Straight (95%)

Homosexual: Gay/Lesbian (0%)

Bisexual (0%)

Other (0%)

Prefer not to say (5%).

Whilst it can be seen that there is probably no (or very little) representation of those other than heterosexual in chaplaincy in Cumbria, the figures cannot be reliably contrasted with the 2011 census, which only posed the question, under Marriage and Civil Partnerships, '(are you) In a registered same-sex civil partnership?' In England and Wales, 104,942 (0.2%) responded that they

were, whilst 737 (0.2%) in Cumbria also responded positively.<sup>256</sup> No conclusion can be reliably drawn from this comparison.

### Ethnicity

<u>England and Wales</u>	<u>Cumbria</u>
Total population: 56,075,912	Total population: 499,858
White British: 45,134,686 (80.5%)	White British: 482,124 (96.5%)
White other: 3,074,709 (5.5%)	White other: 10,133 (2.0%)
Mixed, multiple ethnic group: 1,224,400 (2.2%)	Mixed, multiple ethnic group: 2,504 (0.5%)
Asian/Asian British: 4,213,531 (7.5%)	Asian/Asian British:4,066 (0.8%)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 1,864,890 (3.3%)	Black/African/Caribbean Black British: 579 (0.1%)
Other ethnic group: 563,696 (1.0%)	Other ethnic group: 452 (0.1%)

Asked how they would describe their ethnic group or background, 100% of chaplains in Cumbria responded that they were in one of the 'white' groups. Perhaps some of the reason for this is the same as the analysis under the heading 'Religion', which traces the historic movement and settlement, particularly of Asians, to the more industrial areas of the UK. This may, or may not, adequately address the question of why there are no non-white chaplains at all in Cumbria. Since there is only 1.5% of non-white people in Cumbria at the time of the 2011 census, one would only expect (from 22

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<sup>256</sup> Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, *Equality Data*.  
223

respondents to the quantitative enquiry) a relatively small 0.33% representation.

### *Disability*

The question posed to chaplains was: 'Do you consider yourself to have any form of recognised disability?' However, the census question was more detailed and identified, along with disability, limitation of day-to-day activities due to a health problem that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months.

#### England and Wales

Total population: 56,075,912

Day-to-day activities limited  
a lot: 4,769,712 (8.5%)

Day-to-day activities limited  
a little: 5,278,729 (9.4%)

Day-to-day activities  
not limited: 46,027,471 (82.1%)

#### Cumbria

Total population: 499,858

Day-to-day activities limited  
a lot: 48,523 (9.7%)

Day-to-day activities limited  
a little: 53,198 (10.6%)

Day-to-day activities  
not limited: 398,137 (79.7%)

The question put before chaplains in Cumbria was, 'Do you consider yourself to have any form of recognised disability?' In response, 9.9% replied that they did. This figure has some similarity with the 2011 census, which identified 9.7% of Cumbrians whose day-to-day activities were limited 'a lot'. A discrepancy though, lies in the number of Cumbrians (10.6%) who stated that their day-to-day activities were limited 'a little'. A combined figure of the overall total (20%) suggests that those with some form of recognised disability were under-represented amongst Cumbrian chaplains. However,



since the census provided no further definition between 'a lot' and 'a little', no reliable conclusion can be drawn regarding over or under - representation.

## 17. APPENDIX 4 – ENQUIRY THREE: CONSULTATION ENGAGEMENT

1. Specifically in your role as a chaplain, to what degree do you feel that you were encouraged to participate in the consultation process prior to the introduction of 'Mission Communities'?

Greatly encouraged

Encouraged

Neither encouraged nor discouraged

Greatly discouraged

Not applicable

2. Did you take the opportunity to engage with the consultation process?

Yes

No

3. If the answer to question 2 was 'No' would you like to say why you did not engage, including if it was not applicable to you at that time?

4. Would you like to make any comment about the process of consultation prior to Mission Communities (as it applies to chaplains)?



## 18. APPENDIX 5 – LETTER OF INVITATION

Mattersey Hall,  
Retford Road,  
Mattersey,  
Doncaster.  
DN10 5HD

Telephone: 01777 817663

glynnjones@students.matterseyhall.com

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

### INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear Sir/Madam

I am conducting a research project as part of the requirement for my Doctor of Ministry degree at Mattersey Hall, University of Chester.

As part of my studies I am researching the impact on chaplaincy models in the Diocese of Carlisle and County of Cumbria following the introduction of Mission Communities.

The purpose of this letter is to ask if you, as a practising chaplain, would be willing to participate in the research by completing a short questionnaire and/or being interviewed by a researcher.

If you are willing to be involved in this research it is understood that you are free to withdraw from it at any stage without explanation. All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and in accordance with data protection legislation. You will be anonymised in any write up of the research, which will be in the public domain.

Equally, acknowledging that I hold the Bishop's licence as 'Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle,' assurance is given that no responses will feed into any line-management or performance review for participants.

Please think carefully about whether you can join in this research, and let me know if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

*Glynn Jones*

Reverend Glynn Jones

## 19. APPENDIX 6 – CONSENT FORM

### Consent form

Short Title of Project: An interrogation of the impact of ecumenical  
'Mission Communities' on chaplaincy models  
within the Diocese of Carlisle and County of  
Cumbria.

Name of Researcher: Reverend Glynn Jones

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the  
participant information sheet, dated December 2016  
for the above study and have had the opportunity  
to ask questions.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary  
and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without  
giving any reason and without my care or legal rights  
being affected.

☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person taking consent  
(if different from researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend Glynn Jones

\_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Glynn Jones*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## 20. APPENDIX 7 – PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (2016)

### **AN INTERROGATION OF THE IMPACT OF ECUMENICAL MISSION COMMUNITIES ON CHAPLAINCY MODELS WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF CARLISLE AND COUNTY OF CUMBRIA**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The research short title arises from a re-organisation in 2014 of the Church of England, along with its Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) partners, and latterly the inclusion of the Salvation Army. Essentially, a partnership between the original three denominations was agreed and formalised. Consequently, the 270 Anglican parishes of the Diocese of Carlisle are gradually being re-structured and grouped together with the Methodist circuits, Salvation Army Corps and United Reformed Church congregations across Cumbria to form 40 'Mission Communities.' Within the Diocese/county are a number of chaplaincy models. It is not possible, at this stage, to know how the re-organisation will affect the extended church (in particular, chaplains and their ministries). The purpose, therefore, is to identify the early impact with a view to informing the wider church of the implications of re-organising in this way.

#### **Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen because you are on the register of Anglican, Methodist, Salvation Army and United Reformed Church chaplains for the Diocese/county. Every chaplain on the register will be afforded an opportunity to participate.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent

form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without it being made known that you have withdrawn.

### **What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign the consent form. This will give your consent for a researcher from the Theology and Religious Studies Department at the University of Chester to send you a questionnaire relating to your role as a chaplain and issues surrounding 'Mission Communities.' This should take between 30 and 90 minutes to complete. Following this you may be further invited to interview, which should last about an hour.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

No risks or disadvantages have been identified by the participation in this research.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Individuals may benefit from the reflective practice that comes with engagement. However, the main benefits will be for chaplaincy, church and wider community as re-organisation is explored and the results offered for public scrutiny in the shaping of future structures.

### **What if something goes wrong?**

The primary researcher will always be available for discussion of any issues that may arise. In addition, if you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact:

Professor Robert E. Warner,  
Executive Dean of Humanities,  
University of Chester  
Parkgate Road  
Chester  
CH1 4BJ  
r.warner@chester.ac.uk  
Tel. 01244 511980

### **Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information. Data will be coded to protect anonymity and storage will be password protected and in accordance with current data protection legislation. Equally, acknowledging that the primary researcher holds the Bishop of Carlisle's licence as 'Chaplain to Chaplains in the Diocese of Carlisle,' assurance is given that all responses will be anonymised and will not feed into any line-management or performance review for participants.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results will be written up into a thesis for the requirement of the doctoral degree. As such they will be in the public domain and may also be published. It is hoped that the findings will be of benefit to all chaplains in the county/diocese, as well as the wider church.

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

No private or public funding has been (or will be) applied for or received.

### **Who may I contact for further information?**

Reverend Glynn Jones,  
University of Chester,  
Mattersey Hall,  
Retford Road,  
Mattersey.  
DN10 5HD

Telephone: 01777 817663  
Email: [office@matterseyhall.co.uk](mailto:office@matterseyhall.co.uk)

**Thank you for your interest in this research.**



## 21. APPENDIX 8 – PSI 05/2016 OUTCOMES

Output 1: The Chaplaincy provision reflects the faith/denominational requirements of the prison. Chaplains and Chaplaincy Teams must be appointed to meet the needs and reflect the faith make-up of the prison population. Chaplains must be recruited and appointed in line with national Prison Service guidelines.

Output 2: Prisoners have access to a member of the Chaplaincy Team on first reception into each establishment. Where their faith is not represented, arrangements are made for them to have access to a Minister of their own faith.

Output 3: Prisoners are able to change their religious registration. A prisoner must notify the Managing Chaplain in writing if they wish to change their religious registration.

Output 4: Prisoners have the opportunity for corporate worship or meditation for one hour per week. Provision must be made to enable all prisoners who choose to do so to attend the main religious observance of the week for the faith in which they are registered.

Output 5: Prisoners located in Segregation Units or Healthcare Units have the opportunity for corporate worship or meditation for one hour per week.

Output 6: Recognised religious festivals are appropriately marked and observed.

Output 7: Prisoners have the opportunity to engage with members of their faith group from the community. Prisoners are entitled to visits from their local/home clergy or Minister (e.g. Priest; Imam; Rabbi or equivalent).

Output 8: Prisoners have access to authorised religious artefacts, including dress and headwear. Prisoners must be allowed to possess or have access to, artefacts and religious texts that are required by their faith. Artefacts and religious texts that are allowed are agreed with the Faith Advisers at Chaplaincy HQ.

Output 9: Prisoners have access to a programme of religious educational classes and cultural activities. A programme setting out details of the Chaplaincy educational classes and cultural activities will be agreed with the Governor and published throughout the prison. Provision should be made for religious education and nurture within each faith group. There must be a programme that allows for classes for each faith that are a minimum of one hour, without any financial disadvantage.

Output 10: Prisoners and staff know what religious educational classes and cultural activities are available. Managing Chaplains must ensure there is a

published Chaplaincy programme covering all faith communities and activities. This should be included in the Service Level Agreement/ Business Plan. This should be published sufficiently in advance to allow staff and prisoners to integrate faith requirements and opportunities with other prison programmes. The programme should be published in all staff and prisoner areas. Prisoners for whom the activity is particularly intended should be notified individually.

## 22. APPENDIX 9 – COVENANT PARTNERSHIP IN AN EXTENDED AREA (CPEA)

I was present on 27 November, 2016 in Carlisle Cathedral when Bishop James Newcome, The Reverend Richard Teal, The Reverend Sarah Moore and Major Drew McCombe – the representatives of the four partner denominations signed the following declaration:

‘With the whole Christian Church, we believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We share a life of faith which is the Spirit’s gift, continually received through the Word, the Sacraments and our Christian life together. We believe that we are being called by God to release more deeply our common life and mission, to share and respect the distinctive contributions of our traditions, and to bring about closer collaboration in all areas of witness and service. We commit ourselves and our churches:

- a) to seek out every opportunity for joint initiatives, especially God for All, at local and county level in mission to all people of Cumbria.
- b) to work together to equip both lay and ordained ministry whenever possible, and to share that ministry wherever appropriate.
- c) to continue the work of developing strategies whereby we optimise the use of our church buildings for the benefit of communities throughout the county’.

## 23. APPENDIX 10 – DURHAM CENTRE FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES: PRINCIPLES OF RECEPTIVE ECUMENISM

To recognise that in becoming all that we are called to be, we must own the responsibility that we can only change ourselves rather than others, that we are being resourced for this, and that this task takes time.

To learn from and across our denominational differences in a mutually enriching way that fosters growth within traditions by finding the beauty of another tradition's focus.

To summon churches to return to their core callings in fresh ways that appropriately cohere with the form and patterns of received tradition.

To engage a future-oriented understanding of the Christian tradition as a dynamic web that is open to growth and change.

To emphasize that the ecclesial dimension of conversion includes the ongoing development of the organizational, structural, cultural, and practical aspects of the church.

To embrace the unilateral willingness of ecclesial conversion for the sake of the ongoing flourishing of one's own tradition in love.

The church is always in the service of the truth of Christ's Kingdom, which must be lived out with attentive hospitality of the life and flourishing of other traditions.

To call churches to grow visibly together in structural and sacramental unity with the Triune God.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Paul Murray, 'Receptive Ecumenism'." n.d., [cited 18 July 2017]. Online: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/ccs/constructivetheology/receptiveecumensim/>